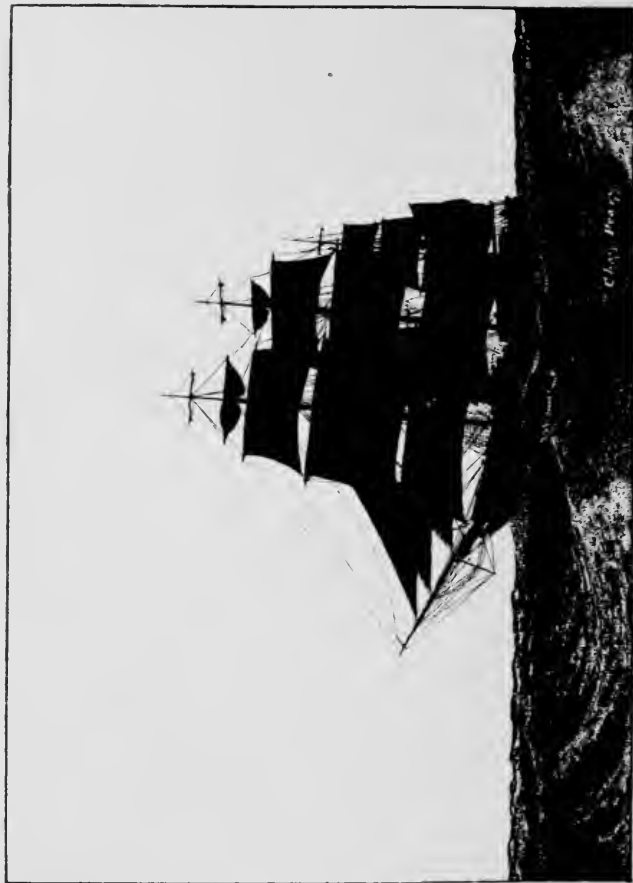


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JOHN JONATHAN
AND COMPANY

BY THE SAME AUTHOR
THE GORDON HIGHLANDERS
THE ROMANCE OF A PRO-CONSUL
(SIR GEORGE GREY)
THE EPISTLES OF ATKINS
MY SUMMER IN LONDON



THE SPIRIT OF THE ATLANTIC

JOHN JONATHAN
AND COMPANY
BY JAMES MILNE

BEING THE FULL TRUE & PARTICULAR
RECORD WITH OBSERVATIONS REFLEC-
TIONS & CONFESSIONS OF A BACHELOR
HONEYMOON OVER THE ATLANTIC
THROUGH AMERICA & CANADA & HOME
AGAIN TO ENGLAND ALL DULY SET
DOWN IN A PROPER MANNER : WITH
A FRONTISPIECE BY CHARLES PEARS

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*“ If all the Earthe were paper white,
and all the sea were incke,
'Twere not inough for me to write,
as my poore hart doth thinke.”*

CONTENTS

| | PAGE |
|--------------------------------|------|
| I. THE SETTING OUT | I |
| II. NEWS FROM NOWHERE | II |
| III. THE LINER AND THE LADY | 22 |
| IV. THE CALL OF THE ATLANTIC | 34 |
| V. THE HUMAN NATURE OF IT | 45 |
| VI. SECRETS OF THE SEA | 57 |
| VII. A CITY THAT NEVER SLEEPS | 69 |
| VIII. A SEARCH FOR A SOUL | 81 |
| IX. PERSONALITY AND STORIES | 94 |
| X. A MIRROR OF CHARACTER | 109 |
| XI. THE AMERICAN MAID & MAN | 121 |
| XII. COUNTRY LIFE IS SWEET! | 134 |
| XIII. POLITICS IN THE REPUBLIC | 149 |
| XIV. PLEASURES OF MEMORY | 162 |
| XV. THE NIAGARA OF THINGS | 175 |
| XVI. A LAND OF NEW RENOWN | 191 |
| XVII. "PIERRE AND HIS PEOPLE" | 206 |
| XVIII. A PRINCE OF DEMOCRATS | 216 |
| XIX. THE EMIGRANT'S FAREWELL | 228 |
| XX. "HOME IS THE SAILOR!" | 240 |

I. THE SETTING OUT

WELL, here I am afloat on the life adventurous to which you have flung me. Already the ship jumps as the blue waves go by. Or rather she rides roughshod over them; as if any creature of man could challenge the majesty of the sea. It gives him his triumphs and then drives itself through them, lest he forget, lest he forget!

What are you thinking about me, I wonder, for you have done a thing which has its high gamble. You said that before you ordered your wedding frock, I had better have a look around; a last look around, you added, to console me, aye, and to console yourself for sending me away. You women are odd, and I suppose the plain-thinking man will never understand you. Perhaps that is wisely ordered, for the world would be less interesting then, less worth living in.

You said we had been "keeping company," as they call it downstairs, for years, and that we knew pretty much all there is to be known about each other. I answered that I had waited for you as long as Jacob waited for Rachel, and that really I wasn't going to wait

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

any longer. You stopped me in the one fashion always effective with a man. You just forgot the last little pin-point of holding-back-ness and let yourself go. But I could not budge you from your idea that I must travel and gain experience—"of mankind" was your phrase, while you really meant womankind; make a sort of grand tour, before settling down with you.

You want me to be quite sure if you are the woman of my life, the undoubted one. You want, also, as you declared, to test yourself, though a woman's doubts rarely relate to herself. Therefore I must go out into the world, the New World, because you think it has not learned so many temptations as the Old World—how like a woman that self-insurance reasoning!—and peradventure return with a whole heart to you. Secretly you would much rather not have me go, it is a wrench to think of it, but the woman in you insists on putting us both to the ordeal.

Oh, yes, you hate the idea of my going, although you will have me go. You hate still more, however, the possibility of a doubt in my man's heart about you. It is a condition of this

THE SETTING OUT

imperfect life that it always has a doubt, something to qualify the supreme hope with which it comforts us in hours of stress. You wish to kill that doubt and you have found an ingenious manner of doing it, if, realising all that is meant, it ever can be killed. Has anybody said that to love is to doubt? You answer that it is surely to suffer, and that it is better not to love than to suffer at the quick of the heart. True love is, must be, to a woman, suffering as well as the great joy, next to motherhood.

When knights were bold, in days of old, their sweethearts made them do knightly things before they would wed them. They made them fight, slay, cover themselves with glory, and maybe blood, which is always ugly, before they would take them in their arms; arms and the man! It was the woman's code, and it has not changed, nor will it, that the knights might take, if they could, before this trial, but given they would not be.

There is a fine, subtle difference there which divides the good woman and the other woman. It is as delicate as the scent of a rose when a June shower falls on its leaves, and as grateful. But outwardly, was it not quite a stupid

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

manner of proving your best beloved ? He was subject to the torture, even himself slain, and what satisfaction my lady could find in that, it beats one, at this distant date, to understand. But she knew ; a woman's sex instinct always knows the woman's right.

Manners and customs have changed but woman's nature remains the same, conquering, enigmatic, a secure law unto itself. You cannot now send your knight forth on a charger, clad in mail, to wade through slaughter to your throne. Perhaps he might never get there, were that the test of his quality. You cannot even stake him in single combat with the other fellow, because duelling has gone out and—there is no other fellow ! Your eyebrows lift as you read, for in that a woman shows the first sign of being herself challenged.

There were a few “possibles,” you remember, at the earlier stages of our homing, but one by one they fell away, although I think you were a trifle sorry when the last one went. Imitation is not, with your delightful half of creation, the sincerest form of flattery. In fact you upset all the accepted truisms and adages, because they have mostly been made by men

THE SETTING OUT

about man's nature. A woman does not naturally speak in phrases, and these being the handy coinage of the world of wisdom, she cuts a poor figure in them. Anyhow, what I wanted to say was that a court of admirers is the sincerest flattery a woman can have. In your case it wasn't that you cared for him ; you didn't ; you were a mere flirt until we met.

How well I remember ! The girl with the beautiful figure, in the blue tailor-made frock ; the girl with the dark hair and the sparkling eyes ; the girl with the red and white complexion, the rather large mouth, red as a rose, and the very small foot ; the girl who only once looked at me and would not return a dozen sentences to my fine compliments. A picture to treasure, for it is the physical being that invites us, the spiritual being that captures us, and a noble blend of the two that holds us.

By and by I shall ask you what is the first memory of me that you have in your mind ? No, in your heart, because as that lover's laureate, Robert Burns, sang to some of his flames :

“The heart's aye, the part aye,
That makes us right or wrong.”

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

There goes the marching order for us, and it comes from one who was a king of sympathy, of understanding, in all the human tangles, if he was not a mine of discretion. Poor Burns ! we keep saying, as if he needed pity. But he lived because he loved, and what a procession of people go through life without being able to say that.

To die and not have been loved is a tragedy ; but to die and not have loved, why, that is not to have lived at all. It is a hard fate to befall a woman, and the thinking, comprehending man come over to years when valour may take the place of discretion, just wants, on sight, to take every spinster of similar years to his arms. Now and then he might find himself on the more dangerous ground of widowhood, where, moreover, the armfuls tend to be large, but you cannot extend sympathy without running risks.

You ended your commands to me by dropping into poetry, not your own but borrowed ; for the wise, you and I among them, drop into other folk's poetry. You were talking of the contented constancy which is needed in the happy marriage. You said that it would be terrible if some morning, in some year, however

THE SETTING OUT

far away, the lines about Helen of Troy came into our minds with a new, personal bearing :

“ Is this the face that launched a thousand ships,
And burnt the topmost towers of Ilium ? ”

It needs to be a living, as well as a loved face, if one is to see it every morning, all life through, and never feel like that. You said the fear of such a thought would drive you mad. My answer was that story of Thomas Carlyle and Jane Welch Carlyle, two lovers, whose married story has pointed many a moral but has not often enough adorned a tale.

They had the abounding intellect and the abounding reticence of the Scottish character, and out of that came the dark braiding of their lives. Genius, especially when you have it on both sides, is ill to mate. But they loved each other, Thomas and Jane Carlyle, with an abiding love such as my story bespeaketh.

Thomas, you know, was up in that sound-proof room of his near the Chelsea Embankment, where the London noises continued to torment him. His wife was bent on her household duties, ardent in those, like every Scottish woman, whether she be in a castle or a cottage.

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

As she passed the door of Thomas's study she stopped, opened it slightly, looked in, and whispered to herself, "There's Tam Carlyle, about whom all the world is talking, and he's my man!"

"And he's my man!" That's it; the sense of possession, of mothering a man, a sense born in every woman, and kept alive in every good woman, whether she has children of her own or not, until the day she dies. The instances of love, where woman and man meet perfectly as woman to man, are beautifully frequent. But more frequent still, I am sure, is the mothering love in a woman for the man she weds, and possibly it wears longer.

Your comment on the Carlyles took me aback, for I told the story to show that even under a difficult roof there dwelt and flowered the tree of love as well as the tree of knowledge. You said, "The story suggests the need for surety between a husband and wife, for faith in each other, and above all for frankness.

"I wonder," you said, "if Carlyle had found his wife at the door there, he would have put his arm round her, kissed her, and told her to run off and not be a baby. Or, still sweeter

THE SETTING OUT

wisdom, have drawn her into that sound-proof room, where, at least, nobody could overhear, and talked secrets, as lovers old or young should. That's what a woman likes, and that is what she too often does not get, the little things of love, the pretty things of the heart. They are there all right, she even knows they are there, but, alas, they may remain unspoken, as perhaps they did with the Carlyles."

You were right ; the small talk of the heart is more in marriage than worldly prosperity, although that smooths the path greatly and is not to be sneered at. But your way of looking at my Carlyle parable had not struck me before. " Kiss me quick and go " may be a good motto for the courting days ; on the other hand it may not ; but when it comes to marriage, the harvest of courting, it should be changed to, " Kiss me long and stay."

There is something in you which makes it hard, at times, for one to say just what one feels. What, what is it ? It is elusive but always there, a veil so fine, so tender, that it shrinks from the touch and yet is strong as steel. It is probably in every woman, this something defensive, uncanny, protective,

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

which keeps one quiet when words would be good. It must be an element of womanhood, but how is one to understand it ? Surely it is that you women have atmosphere rather than personality. Personality in a man, but atmosphere in a woman ; is this the division of spiritual nature ?

If I went into a room, without knowing you to be there, I should at once feel your presence. Strange, wonderful, is it not ? Does a man give that sense of nearness to a woman, or is the quality hers alone ? Have you ever had that feeling about me ? Sometimes I have said to myself, " It must be so, because I have seen her looking for me, when really I could not be seen, although I was there." Man has not the delicate emotions of a woman and he may be without this secret power of communicativeness, atmosphere rather than personality, or he may only have it in a lesser measure. He has to find words for his feelings or be for ever silent, crying, as to you a cry goes over the waters :

" If all the Earthe were paper white,
and all the sea were incke,
'Twere not inough for me to write,
as my poore hart doth thinke."

II. NEWS FROM NOWHERE

WAS not it Robert Louis Stevenson who said, in one of his early letters to his mother, "Think well of me, think ill of me, but aye be thinking"? He knew she would know all he meant by that, the finenesses and the imperfections of man, which keep the woman who loves him in a state of wonderment.

Sweetheart and wife, mother and sister, they all have that unspoken thought, half proud confidence, half vague dread. "If I were only with him!" says each, but she would not go even if she could, because that would seem a want of trusting, and trustfulness, ripened into faith, is the bedrock of love. Undermine that rock ever so little and the whole structure is in danger of falling. Faith in somebody dear, in religion, in God, seems the simplest thing in the world, but really it is one of the hardest. That is why, when a man has faith, he can work miracles, for it bespeaks strength.

You don't want wisdoms of the wise, having enough of your own. You want the foolish things, the trials which shall prove the modern knight true. That is the illogical way of women, they ask security and the gamble

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

together, to have with its certainty, and not to have with its spirit of adventure. If every man be two men, every woman is at least three women ; what she thinks herself, what other people think her, and what she actually is. And there may be sub-women hidden in her beneath those main personalities ; the sub-women of moods and humours, of wilfulness and of angelic gentleness. But you have a fairly direct key to mere man nature in the couplet :

“The devil was sick, the devil a monk would be ;
The devil was well, the devil a monk was he.”

You cannot say anything worth hearing about woman nature in a couplet, and the poets have almost given up trying, except when the trees begin to bloom in the London parks.

You are in London, the city of the quick and the dead, of progress walking over the bones of history, going who knows whither ; there in the height of London's gaieties, when women put on their summer gowns, when London is at her best and hard to leave. You may be seeing the Scots Guards go by to the tune of “The Girl I Left Behind Me,” but you would not like me to bring it into a letter

NEWS FROM NOWHERE

from the sea. It would sound banal to you, a message not from my very self but one out of somewhere, which I had merely passed on, a secondhand heart-beat.

You are right. In the lexicon of affection the trite phrase has no genuine place, the hackneyed quotation no mission. Nobody ever did make love in that manner ; nobody ever will—successfully, anyhow. A woman does not desire to be wooed by the Muses, or by any sort of poetic machine, although often she has a weakness for bards with love-locks who, like musicians of the same pattern, are, happily, not dangerous. She desires to be won as well as wooed, and her woman's instinct tells her that is not the conquering style.

The old Romans knew the way when they captured the Sabine women, the way then and the way now, with qualifications. What Philistinism ! But I only mean that the power of conquest is an element which a woman likes in a man. Not raw physical conquest, not brutal capturing, but something far finer than that ; the superman, not merely the strong man. Perhaps what a woman seeks in a man is every quality implied in the word manhood. She

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

feels that she needs something to lean upon, something stronger than herself for the day of jeopardy, which she knows will come, and that is why she seeks for the complete man as a rock and anchorage. She must respect before she can love, and she must have confidence before she can give herself.

Think what giving and being given in marriage mean to a woman. It is the supreme cast of her life when she appears at the altar. She has the stage to herself for once, and that is a splendid, if brief glory. But she is putting all to trial, faith, hope and charity, her physical beauty and her immortal soul. If the man on whom she showers those greetings fails her, then only Providence is left to that stricken woman. There may be many gambles in a man's life ; the gamble of a woman's all hangs on a single golden thread, her sex, that sweetest mystery of life, that womanhood which keeps the world good. Ah, the world is better than philosophers and philanderers, the two breeds of whom we hear most, would have us believe, and we owe it greatly to the radiance of nature in women.

Daft thoughts, say you, or, more charitably,

NEWS FROM NOWHERE

you tell yourself it is the tang of the sea getting at the brain. But, indeed, we are as yet scarcely out of that water-way of history which is called the English Channel. It is good to stride a liner's deck as she swings by Dover, to behold England on the one shore, your land and mine, and on the other, France, the land of old romance. Those twenty miles of scouring, ever-moving waters, are a very pageant of history, the Rome of salt waters. What have their tides not witnessed since they began to flow? The coming of the Romans to our islands, the coming of Christianity, the coming of endless influences which, in the goodness of time and the native vigour of our character, have made us far-flung.

Set me down the Straits of Dover with a liner for a look-out place and England and France spreading into the bright sunshine, and I will tell you something of history. It is a lesson to give every London child, so let it be commended to those charged with the blessed work of education. Take cargoes of the children down the Thames, round by Dover, as far as the Isle of Wight, and say, "All this is what you read of in your books; this is

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

England, not in ink, but in salt-water." In the English Channel begins the high-road which led England to glory and to well-doing for civilisation, which is far better.

Oh, we have as a nation done mean things, small things, but we have also done the great things. Ask yourself what the earth would have been had there been no England? You recall our voyage yester year, with a happy company, down the Atlantic to Lisbon, and what we both thought of it all. We mixed the man's view and the woman's view and, for that reason, missed little. It needs four eyes to see everything, some wisdom-making person has said. He would have carried his wisdom deeper if he had added that they see most when they look into each other, and it was clear weather right along to Lisbon!

You sail south, across the Bay of Biscay, and when you round Cape Ortegal you find yourself on the ocean road up and down which Nelson chased Villeneuve and the other French admirals. It is a sea-road which is full of tragic interest to every son of the British Isles, as he cannot fail to reflect while being carried past the bare, gaunt, Spanish hills which come down

NEWS FROM NOWHERE

to the coast, as if they were inviting bad weather and wrecks. It seems a fitting frontage, that bold Spanish coast, for the hard fighting which it saw in Nelson's time. There it is to-day, just as it was then, with the sun shining on it and the clouds drifting down from the north and casting shadows, and the long Atlantic breaking in with the hollow roar which Nelson must have known a full hundred years ago.

At Corunna we came very near to the ancient fortunes of Portugal, which included our own; and did not the grave of Sir John Moore, overlooking the harbour, proclaim as much? It stands high, to the right of the town—a town so quaint, so simple yet in its ways and in its people—and it must be a pilgrimage to every Briton who there steps ashore. It was on a Sunday morning that we saw it, when the people of Corunna were coming out from early mass; picturesque people, some of the men in coats of many colours, nearly all the women in black, with mantillas over their heads and the fine colouring of Spanish beauty in their faces and eyes.

The tablet of history stands large beside the

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

grave of Sir John Moore ; it speaks, if you will only listen. You hear it as you stand by that tomb and look across the salt waters to the gaunt Spanish hills, down which he brought his army, and under the shadow of which he embarked it safely, notwithstanding the hot opposition offered by Napoleon's marshals. Very peacefully does English John Moore rest, with his " martial cloak around him," in this Corunna graveyard, so tenderly kept.

We thought of the familiar line that Sunday morning as we witnessed the yearly swearing-in of the local Spanish conscripts. Here was the martial rite, with the splendid ceremonial of the Roman Catholic Church to keep it company, but happily it was a martial rite of peace, not of war, such as Moore knew it at the time of the battle called by us English, Corunna. You said that ordinarily a woman does not like battle-grounds, which represent death, and death by violence, with no women to close the eyes of the men and clothe them for burial. But Corunna was different ; it had no haunting horror for a woman, who instinctively is life, not death.

• We sailed on to the River Douro and visited

NEWS FROM NOWHERE

Oporto, where, in the Peninsular War, Wellington crossed, to the vast surprise of Soult, and took him in the flank. You can see the spot at which the daring passage was made, a spot now marked by a great railway bridge whose span is an eloquent expression of the giant task it was to ford that river in small boats, beneath the possible fire of an enemy so quick and deadly as Soult. Wellington must have been a general of much determination and little imagination or he would have shrunk from the venture. The man of action is better without imagination, though in the supreme man of action it must be present, as in Napoleon.

Ever in our voyage along the coast of Portugal, with dips inland, we came on English mile-posts of history. The greatest monument of this sort, to our share in the past fortunes of Portugal, is Torres Vedras, the line of heights leading from the Atlantic across a comparatively narrow part of the country to the Tagus. Here it was that Wellington sat down to hold a fortified base for sea communication with England, a thing essential to the life of his army. He was to fight it out with the French, until he got them "over the hills and far

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

away"; not only out of Portugal and out of Spain, but across the Pyrenees, back into their own country. The line of Torres Vedras, if you could follow it as we saw it cleave the clear blue sky of a Portuguese morning, takes you naturally to Lisbon, one of the most bewitching cities in the world.

It sits there on its hills to-day, the capital of a republic, as it has sat under successive Braganzas, and as it sat in the days when the Moors came over from Africa. It still looks into the winding Tagus, as into a mirror, and it finds itself as beautiful as ever it did. It has grown, it has prospered, for all its vicissitudes of fortune, and you cannot walk about its streets without seeing that it is a depository of high civilisation, of very considerable wealth, and of marked refinement.

We liked, and we did not like, the women we saw in Portugal, especially those in Oporto, carrying loads on their heads, "hewers of wood and drawers of water." We liked their rhythmic carriage and air of splendid physique. To carry a load on your head, you must not only step nimbly but with an even, easy swing and motion. They walk, those Portuguese moving

NEWS FROM NOWHERE

pictures, from the hips, with a strength and a swing remarkable. But it was sorrowful to see women so burdened. It is an abuse of ancient chivalry, in which Portugal once was rich, and of modern progress, to which she may come.

Very delicious was our sojourn in Portuguese waters, with the sunshine early mornings, which found us all about, and the late balmy nights which found us not abed. It was an inviting preface, an inspiriting stirrup-cup, to the longer sea voyage of crossing the Atlantic, seeking, like Columbus, the New World, but in a very different way, for it is a far more dangerous place than it was in his time. Then men took their risks neat, like their drinks, knowing exactly the ingredients. Now the froth of a high civilisation hides many a dangerous cup.

III. THE LINER AND THE LADY

THE temptations of Saint Anthony have begun and you had better know all about them. They really began the moment he boarded his boat for, to speak in a poetic parable :

“The Liner she’s a lady and she never looks nor ’eeds—
The man-o’-war’s ’er husband, an’ ’e gives ’er all she needs.”

You are puzzled when I sing and sigh, which is not wonderful. “The Liner she’s a lady !” Yes, the lady of the sea, the craft to which the ironclad and the “tramp” take off their hats in salutation, the dainty-footed beauty who skims the ocean as if it were a ball-room floor, cutting the waves into petticoated billows of lace about her feet. She passes, holding her head high, in pride not disdain, calling for admiration, getting it. Down into the deep waters of the Atlantic goes the liner, with the carriage and air of an elegant woman.

But the “liner she’s a lady” in another fashion also ; as a daily sacrifice to the collective woman, consisting of many women, whom she carries for passenger. My sailing has already taught me that, and indeed woman reigns on

THE LINER AND THE LADY

sea as well as on land, if she does not always rule. After all that is a very fair division of the world as between the two sexes, that one shall reign and the other rule. You need a man, I presume, to captain a ship if only because he so entirely sacrifices his vessel to the comfort of the ladies.

Does that lithe, well-frocked American woman who has walked down the deck with the air of a young Juno get sea-sick, as she may, the Atlantic being ungallant at whiles ? Then the liner ministers to her with every ton gross as registered *AI* at Lloyds. Is she well, and she seems mighty well, the liner is all devotion, admiration, flirtation, even love-making, for that deuce is in the salt air as well as in Byron's moon. The poets have not made nearly enough of the sea as a background for love and passion, being always lost in its splendours. Their attention might respectfully be drawn to its possibilities in passion, plain or coloured, in simple sentiment or compound problems.

The sailing order of the liner is, "Gentlemen—the ladies !" She is a floating world where there is no need to cry "Votes for women," because everything, to the entire joy

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

of everybody else, is shaped for the woman. The unseen signal flying at the bald mast-tops, where the wireless wires crackle and splutter, is "At your ladyship's service!" You could read it there against the blue sky when we were only a forenoon out and the first deck parade was still afoot. It is only the women who count in this parade, not the men, whose motto has to be, "They also serve who only stand and wait."

Clothes are the women at the outset of a voyage, whatever may happen later, friendships, proposals, or just the having of a merry good time. We all work by ready-reckoner in the impressions we get of each other, and here the process is swift. The woman whose frock and hat have carried her comely through the partings with friends, is sure of a distinguished place in a voyage. Her success, when other women are rumpled and draggled, springs from an individuality, from, like Father O'Flynn, having "an ilegant way" with her.

It is amazing how that gift tells where "two or three are gathered together" on an ocean high-way. The sea-going heroine will have other qualities; good features, soft brown hair,

THE LINER AND THE LADY

a slumbering, really glad eye, but her inner self, atmosphere again more than personality, is the secret of her conquering. The deck steward will be bringing her two chairs instead of one. Shrewd, far-seeing fellows, those deck-stewards ; they know that second chair will be in request when the sea beguiles.

The liner is not only a lady, but her ladyship is already enthroned and knows it, and shows she knows it. Note the dimpled smile falling into the deep collar of a becoming fur coat, and the satisfied eye dreaming behind the folds of a motor veil. Elizabeth ! Elizabeth ! your home is on the deep, and you are only now discovering it. You must dress true for the part, holding by fast colours and letting the delicate shades mourn in your cabin trunk. Beauty not over-adorned is beauty on a liner ; navy blue or nothing, as an authority on such matters once said, a trifle crisply.

Triumphant in everything is the lady on the liner, except when her curiosity cannot be satisfied, and that is hard on a woman in any circumstances. She will know, and yet she does not wish to know too much, either because she thinks that dangerous ground or because

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

she hates to keep a secret, although she can when she likes. Could she tell the essential difference between the English woman and the American woman as they walk the planks of our liner, in their style of dress anyhow ? Madame and Miss Columbia are in the majority, and that gives them an initial advantage which it is possible they may keep on merit.

“Our women as a type,” says a bright American lady sitting within earshot of me, “are perhaps the best-dressed women in the world. If they are not they ought to be, because they spend plenty on clothes, sure enough. They can put them on, wear them, an art wherein, as I fancied in London, English women are often wanting. But the occasional English woman one sees is quite a ‘stunner’; she has perfect taste in dress and an air for wearing it. She is probably a limited quantity, that particular English woman, but where else will you match her ? That I concede, because generally I think that American women dress more smartly, more neatly, turn themselves out better than the English woman. But again, for life is made up of compensations, there is a greater variety of personality among English

THE LINER AND THE LADY

women than among us, and that tells in their favour."

This little discourse, which there was no harm in overhearing, probably put the Anglo-American dress situation very fairly. The English woman has been taught to treasure her face and her complexion, the beautiful gifts of our sea-girt isles, with their moisture-laden atmosphere. Miss Columbia cannot rely on her face, partly because, coming of a mixture of races, she runs to expression, not to regularity of feature, and even more because the dry American climate gives a complexion no chance. An English girl says "My face is my fortune," but happily she is growing to know that she need not be ashamed of a good figure, and wrap it out of sight in a Victorian antimacassar. The American girl says, "My figure's my fortune," and lives up to it.

An art of life is to set a true course at the outset and, keeping it, learn the rest as you sail. This is the first principle of navigation ; to keep your road and a keen look-out, and it is not forgotten by the liner even in her moments of most devotion to my lady. It is an ideal arrangement that she should not only

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

be the lady of sea craft but that she should be all surrender to the sex. Maybe, though, it is just as well that the "liner she's a lady" did not flourish in the brave days of Morgan and Kidd and the other kingly pirates and philanderers. For they would instantly have shouted "Yo, ho, ho, for a bottle of rum!" and gone forth to capture her—arms and the woman.

As we sail onward, outward, into the desert waters of the Atlantic, we find the shroud of the *Titanic* lying across them. It resembles a fog on the Banks of Newfoundland, where she rests so deep that no man will ever see her again. Things, you are told, sink in those unmeasured fathoms, yet never perhaps reach the bottom, but float betwixt and between—a weird thought. The *Titanic* is already one of the world's great tragedies, a sorrow-laden story which will not be silenced, only we shall learn to see the heroic comfort in it, instead of the tears. Never, surely, has a tragedy so moved humanity, so gripped its heart and mind. It is one of life's ironies, for think a moment about it, as one must, looking down on the blue-black Atlantic waters which alone know all that happened and will give up no secret.

THE LINER AND THE LADY

You had the building of the ship, the biggest ever launched, a vessel into which ingenious man had put the last word of marine knowledge, a craft of which Longfellow might have sung in a new version of his poem :

“ Build me straight, O worthy Master
Staunch and strong, a goodly vessel,
That shall laugh at all disaster,
And with wave and whirlwind wrestle.”

She set forth, the wonderful *Titanic*, unconquerable, unsinkable, as all men agreed, flying the pennant of triumph over storm and blast. Then a berg of ice, drifting aimlessly down from the Arctic, happens to come into her path. It rips her open, she, the unconquerable, the unsinkable, as if she were a tin of sprats, and she is lost.

With the rest, let us not harrow ourselves afresh, but what does it all mean ? What was the purpose, where is the lesson for mankind ? Is there, we cry in our dismay, a Providence, wisely ordering the universe for us ; or does brute chaos rule ?—

“ An automatic sense
Unweeting why or whence.”

An American lady, daughter of an old

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

Puritan family of New England, has given me a view on that. She is returning from a visit to the Holy Land, and, unlike many people who make that pilgrimage, it has deepened her religious sense, for she has not allowed the Palestine of to-day to mingle with her picture of Christ on earth. She says that, to her mind, the tragedy of the *Titanic* has two lessons which Providence desired to impress on man. Providence found it needful to abate him in his satisfied ambition that he had subdued the forces of Nature ; and Providence wished to moderate the luxury and the hurry, the extravagance and the bustle which have characterised the opening of the twentieth century, and for which the millionaires of America, so she felt, have been largely responsible.

What was one to say to that ? When somebody talks to you sincerely in the name of Providence you are driven to silence. You cannot make terms with Providence, cannot interpret the decrees of Providence, if such there be : in fine, you are driven back on faith, an anchorage from which, it may be, those are happiest who stray least.

You hear Omar Khayyám described as an

THE LINER AND THE LADY

old Persian heathen, "that pagan poet," and clearly the pagan note riots in his "Rubáiyát." But yet I never read that poem without feeling better in faith, without getting the impression that in Omar, anyhow in Edward FitzGerald who is Omar to us, faith is a hand-maiden that waits on philosophy. Is there not one echo of it in the often quoted lines :

"The Moving Finger writes : And having writ,
Moves on : nor all your Piety nor Wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,
Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it."

Blank paganism ; the ordering of the universe a splendid, continuing accident ; man when he dies—nothing ! No ; the on-going of things is recognised by Omar the heathen, their warp and woof, the abidingness of their results, and is not that faith ?

We think, you and I, much alike in those supreme matters ; that is we have the faith to believe. We feel that surely a Providential hand is at the helm of the world, directing it onward, upward. We hope that the soul of man, like that of John Brown of Gettysburg, goes marching on after his body lies mouldering in the grave. There are elements in our

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

nature which cry those two cries, which need to cry them, if we are to step forward usefully.

That very instinct is evidence of the undying in man, and you cannot reduce the mystery of life and death to an affair of cross-examination. If it could be proved, which it cannot, that our earth just swings through space, a magnificent runaway without any controlling force to govern it, that human life goes out like the flicker of a candle, leaving only a speck of smoke behind, would we be as happy as we are? No; a little knowledge may be a dangerous thing; too much would be deadly.

Why does one drift into those uncharted deeps? Possibly because it is in their tangled folds that any soul communion between a man and a woman dwells. Never to have been together among the eternities, or to drift apart on them, is to be sundered in the common rounds of life. It betokens an imperfect working arrangement, a want not so much of confidence, perhaps, as of understanding, sympathy. Sympathy is the last word in the happy relationship, and it is a bond of two strands: instructive comprehension, willing forgiveness.

THE LINER AND THE LADY

The Atlantic atmosphere is so clear that my eye easily goes to the crow's-nest, high above our liner, where a sailor is looking for the secrets of the sea. You compare him to mankind searching, ever since this world began, for the hidden or half-hidden knowledge, to mankind peering wistfully for the secrets of the other world. "He loves me, he loves me not!" says the girl tearing the petals from a tell-tale flower. "He sees them, he sees them not," says mankind, but he goes on looking; and all's well!

IV. THE CALL OF THE ATLANTIC

“**S**EEING visions, dreaming dreams,” says the captain, as he comes and leans over the bulwarks beside me. It is a beautiful forenoon, with a great sun on the great waters and the passengers all on deck. He is making a round of them saying a cheery word here and there, sometimes more. They like the attention ; a word with the captain, ah, ah ! It means importance, or seems to mean it, and that is often the same in our frail world.

The commander—for that is the right name, what he gets from his ship’s company—of an Atlantic liner, is several people all in one. He is the man who has to see ship and passengers safely across ; the man who comes down to dinner when the weather permits, bringing at least one new story every time ; the man who wakes and walks in the watches of the night, to confirm that all’s well ; the man with the special smile for ladies who must flirt with seasickness or something else.

He fills various offices, does the commander of an Atlantic liner, for a not over-princely salary. You may call him a real case of the man and the super-man blent in a single, genial,

THE CALL OF THE ATLANTIC

guarded presence. He is even the spiritual minister of his people, for he conducts the service on Sunday, and this is one of the choice events of an Atlantic voyage. You are "far from humanity's reach," you have to "finish your journey alone," and that feeling of the sea broods into you as you take your place for devotion.

A large, low-roofed saloon, crowded with the passengers, the majority women ; the sea flowing blue or darksome on either side of the ship, as the portholes tell you ; two rows of stewards and stewardesses in a middle aisle to be choir ; the captain in full uniform standing at a table covered with the Union Jack, the Bible and the Prayer Book of the Anglican Church. It is utterly simple, acutely impressive, this sight, and you feel as well as see it ; in particular if a hymn be given out that was a favourite on deep-sea ships long before the *Titanic* sank, "Nearer my God to Thee." The words have a new meaning when you are in deep waters, a sincerity in which the very sound of the ocean joins. But the whole service is a treasure to keep in memory, not to write about, an experience of the soul.

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

“No,” say I to the captain’s remark, “I was neither seeing visions nor dreaming dreams ; I was wondering how it is with the person who falls from a height like this, speed twenty knots, into those curling waters. They seem very inviting, they almost ask one to join them, they might get hold of one if one looked at them over-long from the bulwarks. Are they not enticing, with a devil’s bewitchment on their beautiful face and murder in their embrace ? But the man who would let them turn his head and fall overboard, what of him ? ”

The captain thinks for a moment, looking down at the long web of Irish lace which a wave, broken against the bow of the steamer, has spread over the green and blue background of the Atlantic. “Deft bit of workmanship, isn’t it ? ” he remarks to himself more than to me, as the pattern of foamy white is licked away by the next big roller with its own art in salt water to display.

“Well,” he goes on, “I don’t know how it would be with the man overboard, what sort of feeling he would have. I fancy that in sudden happenings of the life-and-death sort, the mind mostly ceases to act, and the animal

THE CALL OF THE ATLANTIC

in us, instinctive to live, gets to work for all it is worth. But I'll tell you what would happen on the ship, because there's no possibility, I take it, for which a skipper has not prepared beforehand.

"You might," he quietly speaks, "expect the ship to be pulled up hard, suddenly, with swift messages from the bridge to below, and a huge engine commotion there. Swift messages there would be, but these would not be to stop the ship in her straight course. No; there is a better, a quicker way of getting back to that man in the sea and the boat, which meanwhile has been launched after him. It is to bring the ship round in a circle, and that process will begin the moment the need for it is known. The pace at which we are going would take us a long way forward, even with the engines reversed. But turn at full speed in a wide ring, and you are back at the life or death point in little time, without strain or confusion. Every other voyage we carry out the manoeuvre just as, at a surprise moment, the bugle sounds the fire alarm."

Clearly the Atlantic liner has, in herself, a very human side, even a tragic side, as that

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

shows, because it touches the eternities. In harbour she is a dead shell, but sail her out upon the high sea and she becomes alive, a great, fine machine. The charm of a voyage across the Atlantic lies not alone in sunshine, calm, or cracking breeze, in radiant sky or mottled clouds, but in the sympathy between nature and the peopled ship. Old Mother Nature of the sea is a wonderful calmer, healer, smoother away of the small irritabilities of life on land. You may learn a good deal about her, if you will, through the means of communication which she exercises with a ship, her uncanniness as well as her friendship, for she has both, as an incident gleaned from the captain while we talk on will tell. The majesty and uncertainty of the ocean is in it, the twin forces which keep every ship in peril until she is in harbour.

“We were on the northerly Atlantic route,” says the captain, “whereas this voyage we are well south, indeed far south, as the constant sun and the warmth of the air will inform you, even if you have not looked at the chart. Likewise it was the iceberg time of year, when they come down from the Arctic, gradually melting as they drift. The temperature of the water

THE CALL OF THE ATLANTIC

told us that there was ice about, and we were very much on the alert. The northerly point of the wind brought the cold snap of it along. The submarine telephone which goes from the bridge of a liner like this down to its keel, there to catch and send up the deep sea sounds, had brought murmurs as of ice grinding against ice. But not a berg had been seen and, after a weary spell of fog, I was fain to seek a rest.

“Soon, however, I was back on the bridge with a boding idea of an iceberg being in our course. Nay, I saw it in my mind’s eye, a mass not unlike a floating church, with two steeples, one higher than the other, and churning water about its black base. Call it sensitiveness to danger, begotten of long acquaintance with that northern ocean! Call it second-sight, or what you will. I could not get it out of my mind, and in obedience to what was almost a command given me by an unseen agency, I ordered a sharp change in the course. I could not have justified it nautically before an inquiry, my ticket would have been suspended, and, like many another skipper, I should have finished my sea life for want of a ship, the sad ending of many a good man. But

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

I did the thing, something impelling me, something with which I could not argue. Scarcely had the change taken effect, when a shout came from the look-out, 'Ice ahead, starboard !' The deviation carried us clear of a jagged berg ; my berg with two steeples, one higher than the other."

When I turned to the captain he was looking far out to sea, with that light in his eye which long commerce with it gives a man. I knew what he was thinking, that it was of the abiding mystery of great waters and the strange things that happen on them, and I understood enough to be silent. But what is there in those born to sailor, to captain, the sea, that others have not ? Its rewards are poor, its spirit of adventure great, and that must be what calls so many fine men to the "ocean wild and wide."

Such a sea-story as that I have set down for you, one may gather in ten days on an Atlantic liner, but not in the smoke-room. The romance of the sea and the salt-tanged air penetrate everywhere else, not there. It was, however, the smoke-room only, because the rest of the ship had gone to bed, which, the other night, got a sea nocturne so beautiful that one

THE CALL OF THE ATLANTIC

will always remember it. We were nearing the Gulf Stream, where icy and tepid tides meet, as the hot and cold-water taps of a bath mix, making a cloud of steam. The same process gives you a fog in the Gulf Stream region as you approach America, and there had been several solid hours of it.

It is a dreary blanket that to draw over a steamer loaded with passengers, blotting out the seascape and, alas, also straightening out the curls of the pretty women. "I should get nervy with this," laughed a girl from the recesses of her deck chair, "if it did not keep me so busy tidying my hair out of the dank wisps into which the moisture flattens it." Every minute or so the syren roars hoarsely, and you fall into the way of listening for an answering horn. To the right, to the left, where is it? The bridge knows and the bridge is answering, or yours may be the only ship about and there is no answer, which is eerier still. You have all a very helpless feeling, and if you know the prayer for those who go down to the sea in ships, now, wrapt in this cold, pallid, sheeted fog, is the time to say it.

That was the close of the day, the coming of

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

the night, when the throb of the engines invades your backbone as you lie in your berth, courting sleep, really listening to the harsh roar of the foghorn. Towards midnight there was a sea change. Softly, mysteriously, silently as it had come, the pall lifted and was carried away, who knows where? Next a brilliant moon filled the ocean, which danced to it in a thousand ripples of gold, here the bustle and movement of a modern quadrille, yonder the stateliness of an old-time gavotte.

It was a gorgeous ball that the Atlantic danced to the bright eyes of the moon and the cajolery of the stars. It had thrown aside its graveyard wrappings of murky white, put on all the colours of its wardrobe, and was dancing bare-bosomed to the radiant night. You understand that the Atlantic, having risen from some hours of the grave, was sprightly. The moon and the stars had kissed it back to life again.

A season of fog, then a sudden lighting up of the sea, and next a still small voice crying to the night, "Ship ahoy!" It was this news which brought the smoke-room crowd on deck, but they had been parting anyhow. What they

THE CALL OF THE ATLANTIC

saw was worth the seeing, and suggested what they might not have seen, but felt, had the fog not miraculously gone away.

It was a big, three-masted sailing ship tumbling slowly in the heavy Atlantic roll. She had out every stitch of canvas and made a picture of fragile, fairy beauty against sea and sky. We came up with her, were passing her, and had almost left her behind in the cold waters, before a solitary figure on her bridge could wave a hail and farewell. You could have thrown a biscuit from our deck to her's, and in the fog would the passing have been as wide? The splendid beauty of the moonlit, starlit scene, the possibilities for that silent ship and for us in the fog! It was a thought to go below and sleep over.

But the night's life was not finished on deck, for a handsome young American from Arizona was showing the lingering smokers how to throw the lasso. We all know it as a long rope flung to catch the untamed cattle of the prairie, or bring a horse to his knees and his senses. Here was a fine show of its art and craft, of the marvels that can be done with it. Why, he made that rope whistle through the

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

air, return to him again, and in the interval cut a dozen capers. An essay in Western life—"the West, the West, the land of the free!"—read to the high sea in the small hours of a glorious morning. Shipboard human essays, so picturesque and varied, give the Atlantic a second call to whoever loves the sea and will try to understand its fellowship with men.

Does it touch you at all, I wonder, or do you think of it, womanlike, as the ruthless wrecker of ships, the murderer of husbands and sweethearts, the foul slayer of delicate women who, in the traffic of life, must give themselves to its carriage? That is the sea of nightmare, not my sea, which is all buoyant hope and the rude health which begets it.

V. THE HUMAN NATURE OF IT

THERE is a wife we know who kisses her golfing husband out of a Saturday morning to the lilt, “‘There’s safety in numbers,’ says Rory O’More.” She is thinking of the batch of mere men with whom he is going to spend the day. He takes the kiss as he takes his golf-sticks, being a good golfer and therefore without prejudice of any sentiment. But think of living most of one’s life with one who hears no music in that challenge. It must be dull to be the wife of a solid, prosperous man who is a good golfer, and therefore desperately safe.

You will think of that other, older wife of our knowledge, who henpecked her husband until he had not a feather left. She also upbraided a younger married couple about to take a vacation away from each other, as Thomas Carlyle prescribes for the happy domestic life. She said, “Why, John and I have been married thirty years and we have never been an hour from each other’s side !” Poor John ! He said nothing, but one marvels what he thought. Did he whisper to himself grimly, “Security of tenure is good, but there

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

may even be too much of it." He should have taken an Atlantic voyage, even if he had to hide himself as a stowaway—from his wife.

You did not whistle " 'There's safety in numbers,' says Rory O'More " at my head, but perhaps you thought it. Therefore I must tell you of the more intimate incidents of the voyage, the "private and confidential," as young girls say on the envelopes of their first love letters. There they are not so foolish as you might think, for they are very happy and they merely want to let all the world know it. What finer picture could you have than a girl, lost in love's young dream, wishful that everybody else should share her happiness ?

Opposite me, at table, there sits an American girl, for she is still that though a wife, who is returning from her honeymoon in England. She did not follow the plan of the Chicago lady, of Atlantic tradition, who told a fellow passenger that she was on her honeymoon, and, being asked, "But where's the bridegroom," replied, "Oh, he was too busy to get away with me!" One hopes he did not repent his busyness and that she returned safely to him. She probably did, if she had the cold courage

THE HUMAN NATURE OF IT

to take a honeymoon all alone! My pretty American has her husband with her, and a very happy pair they seem, though at first they said little to each other and less to us.

She has a milk-and-white complexion, got on the Pacific Slope where she lives, and where the weather is kinder to women's cheeks than it is in most parts of America. Her lips are red and humorsome, her eyes lively, and when she comes down in one of her evening gowns, cut not over-low, not over-high, you see, as possibly she wishes you to see, that one day she will be a very fine figure of a woman. Her demureness disappeared when she told us—she could not help telling us, could not keep it back!—of the tragedy which had overtaken her well-dressed husband's pink tie.

We had all noticed his large choice of ties, that he had three or four for the day, liking to change them. He had kept a pink one to be a special success and, with his wife to bear him company, had taken it round the deck. But, alas! he had forgotten that the salt sea air quickly extracts delicate colours. Behold, then, his dismay when his wife discovered for him, in an hour or two, that the pink had vanished

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

from the tie and that he was wearing a bit of silk which might have come from a wash-tub, so innocent was it of any particular colour.

She was splendidly amused, because a woman likes to take the dandiness out of a man, even if he be her husband, holding that here is an invasion of her sphere. He accepted the catastrophe very well, being sensible, as well as fond of nice ties, a combination of human nature which is unusual. Nay, he happily wound up her recital of the incident by re-telling the story of Beau Brummell and his valet. A friend, calling on the Beau some forenoon, met his valet on the stairs with an armful of ties and the remark, "These are our failures." "Here," said our American, "is one of my failures."

Most types of human nature gather at the tables of an Atlantic liner, and you find them very natural. Being strangers to each other they have no reason either for reserve or for artifice. They let themselves go, and in conversation even court a frankness which they might shun in their own circles. It is a frankness of which curious women are sometimes inclined to take undue advantage, but it is at their own risk, so let them.

THE HUMAN NATURE OF IT

There is an English parson's wife within hearing distance of my own chair, and she is disposed to be sprightly. When she gives way to a worldly remark, however, she falls back in her seat with a shocked rebound which endangers her plate. She is enjoying her outing, is eager for adventure, preferably a shipwreck, although her courage is as catholic as it is simple. She has never been on the sea before and feels herself a heroine, more particularly as she is going to America where she positively will not be safe. How could she be safe in a country which must be the abode of savagery, as compared to dear old England!

An American near her has seized upon the wonderment of the lady, and constantly tells her in whispers of the perils to which she will assuredly be subject. He is convincing, because he is six feet high and of great gravity of feature, like the familiar portrait of Abraham Lincoln. She will find Red Indians, armed with tomahawks, at every turn on her way to Chicago, where she is going! They will want her scalp for certain; and thereupon, foolish woman, she put up her hand to ascertain if the youthful wig which she wears was in its place

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

all right. That was a fatal move on her part, for every other woman at the table saw it. They had suspected that top-work, but here was convincing evidence that it was a wig. The lively wearer might have managed better, if only for the reputation of the rector and the rectory at home.

Her Reverence came to the next meal, however, determined to wipe away her tears. She had put on, to try it, the frock in which, as she instantly explained in a loud whisper to her right-hand neighbour, she meant to land at New York. It was almost as splendid in its colours as Jacob's coat, but a pious hope might be expressed that the latter fitted its wearer better.

You are to suppose all the treasured-up brocades, silks and satins of a long rectorial line of worthy, if perhaps plain, not to say scraggy, English women, because a type goes backward as well as forward. These treasures are dug out of the trunks which have sheltered them from time and the moths, and bits here and there are welded into this frock which is to capture America. Wonderful, but it was not dress, and we looked at the dear, innocent

THE HUMAN NATURE OF IT

lady and silently asked why should she not have stayed at home ?

Here she was, going to the country which has, taking them all in all, the best-dressed women on the earth. More, she was going to bespeak "England, home and beauty," and she thought she would do it finely. Nobody had the heart to tell her otherwise. Yes, an American lady with a sweet face did give her a word of tactful advice about the bonnet which surmounted the frock.

It made her face look exactly like a daisy, except that daisies have neither wrinkles nor moles. Out of its circular rim, overgrown with a dozen different blooms, peeped that face, like the "wee, crimson-tipped" gowan. But what the American lady said was, "My dear, it's far too nice a bonnet to wear in New York, and on the train, travelling to Chicago, it would be ruined. Keep it and put on something which will not spoil." She looked grateful, having, perhaps, a feeling of the truth, and we heard no more of the bonnet. How fared its owner ?

Travel, the desire to rove, is bred in the English bone, but there are some English

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

people we might certainly keep at home. One sort is the woman who has lived a sheltered life so fully that she is unqualified for anything else. Another is the insular man who, having seen the world not at all, goes out into it with his nose in the air, sniffing at everything new because it bears no English hall-mark. A third is the woman of much wandering, with strongly developed mannish habits, who, while on the wing, wears her oldest clothes, thinking them good enough for the company. A fourth is the Englishman of the same brand who has a loud voice, a loud-checked Norfolk suit, and an absence of humour, a common circumstance with Englishmen, who really draw most of their mirth from the Celtic Fringe.

Those types grate, as they must, for, to use an expressive American word which one hears on board ship, they are not good "mixers." Happily our ship is fairly free of them, but, there is a lady so like Mistress John Bull in her best manner, that she must be mentioned particularly. This lady is tall, almost majestic, in the way she towers skyward, and of a breadth in proportion. She has a firm hold on the deck as she walks, and she wears clothes which

THE HUMAN NATURE OF IT

are not only old but which have become absurdly short at the ankles. Such ankles, too !

She is a compelling figure, "sublime, indifferent to fate," as Bret Harte describes San Francisco, sitting at its "western gate." Her walk resembles the footfall of fate, or, at all events, the march of the British Empire down the centuries. What, after all, is the use of having good feet, if you do not, as a race, take grip of the globe with them and hold on ? Perhaps that would be her ladyship's retort, if she thought one worth while, to the wag who has christened her the "Titanic."

Human nature is a broth of many elements and we have some that are aggressive and disconcerting, others cheerful and engaging. You judge as much on sight and generally you get no further than this ; they are "ships that pass in the night." But the soft, cooing voice of a deftly dressed woman from Old Virginia is a grateful change upon the sharper, harder accent of her table neighbour opposite, who is from Boston. The Eastern woman has it in rapid brains and swift wit and she can wear her clothes equally well, for the American women all have that excellent trick. But give me the

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

Southern woman with her easy, leisurely tinkle of words, begotten, perhaps, from a negro nurse, her olive skin and her dreamy, dark eyes which prison an abashing innocence. At least they abashed me, across three feet of white table-cloth, until an evening back when there was a late Welsh-rarebit party to which I was bidden.

The Southern lady is the young wife of the American afore-mentioned who has a face like Abraham Lincoln and a dry wit to correspond. It is much better to be a Red Indian in America than a negro, and indeed an Indian mould of face is almost cultivated. "Yes," said this disciple of that cult, "it's a Welsh-rarebit and ale for a few chosen souls at ten o'clock p.m.—will you come?" Naturally, and for an hour or two, when the rest of the ship had gone to bed, there were talk and story, chiefly the American story.

Why is the American story always told by a man, for the women don't seem to be story-tellers; more, anyhow, than other women! Perhaps it is because the American story is apt to be so long, perhaps because there is too much method, too much hammer-and-chisel

THE HUMAN NATURE OF IT

work in its humour. It begins quietly, in a low key, with a suggestion of mystery and another suggestion of infinite possibilities. Then it goes on working itself and you up, until you decide that a fine joke is arriving. It does, but mostly as an anti-climax, and that is where the joke comes in, if you please.

We had a story of a Southern American judge who wanted to give a friend an especial dinner. He instructed his negro cook that it was to include a plump goose. But, strict injunction, the bird must contain no lead pellets ; it must be done to death otherwise, because these were bad for the teeth, not to say the digestion of a distinguished guest.

Well, we had the long humourous pow-wow in which the judge and his negro cook settled that affair, and the night of the dinner came and the goose. Promptly out of him there fell a score of pellets, with promise of many more within, and the host demanded in wrath how was this ?

Understand that what has been set down is the faintest summary of a graphic, dramatic tale, working up and up in interest and expectation until the—anti-climax ; for, quoth the

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

cook, " Massa them pellets were not meant for that goose ! "

" Too bad ! " interjected a member of the Welsh-rarebit party, to whom our Abraham Lincoln, junior, turned his stoical Indian face with the remark, " Yes, like the other story of the three eggs—two bad ! "

Neat ; and in the pause which always follows a good passage of words, Mrs. Abraham Lincoln, junior, she of the South and the innocent eyes, said to her husband in a lovely whisper, as she rose to go, " Perhaps, my dear, it's late enough now for you to tell your other stories ! "

VI. SECRETS OF THE SEA

SHALL I tell you what the sea tells me personally, the many, many secrets it whispers to me, sitting on the roof of a liner swinging through it ? It mostly tells me that it is an illustration of all life, in being a creature of shades and shadows, of sparkle and gleam. After all that is life, the smile and sorrow, the laugh and the tear with, when life is well lived, an achieving force behind, like the sea itself.

Yesterday the Atlantic glowered up at us with a hiss in the curl of every wave. It spat foam because wind had come out of the rain-laden clouds on the far horizon. It threatened storm rather than stormed, making you think of an irritable person who has not mind enough to be angry and get it over.

To-day the Atlantic is blue and green in the sun of a very spacious firmament, such as you can see on the open ocean, such as the Biblical writers describe seeing in the desert. The waves, when they break at all, do so with a gentle caress. They seem to be calling "Come down and dance with us !" They leap merrily, singing to each other the unset, unsetting music of the eternal waters. Listen to them !

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

They cry mystery, saying neither where they come nor whither they go, again as with the waves of life. By, below me, heaving the ship gently, runs a long, deep-coloured Atlantic roller, determined not to hiss its strength away in ribbons of pretty foam. It is a man among waves, shaped to last a journey, not to look merely beautiful, like a girl clad in white.

The syren roars out the noon hour as that roller passes, towards England and you. How long will it take to reach the coast of Cornwall, if it ever gets as far? If you were there, would you know that I had seen it go by and blown it a salute to take you? Perhaps it may bear along that kiss and throw it up, a splash of foam on the rocks by "dark Dimdagel" where Arthur came ashore.

Surely we are linked up in mysterious ways by the elements, those of us who love as well as live? Thinking of home, and home is thinking of us: and so is made the magic band which circles the world in less time than Puck took for the journey. One needs that thought during an Atlantic voyage, for endless waters make one moody at times, even gloomy.

Everybody born among hills takes something

SECRETS OF THE SEA

of their whimsical moods, and the sea brings these out, as in fact any strong influence of nature upon men will do. That is the good of the sea, it gets you back to your original, primitive self, causes you to forget cankers and cares and be a healthy animal, with, if you are fortunate, a soul to keep you from being the other animal.

The sea speaks to you of life lived at its best, of death died at its most heroic. Its tang gives you fresh vitality, sends thoughts swimming through your brain more quickly than you can find words for them. It is intractable in its influence on the mind, a giant playing with a trifle, careless, indifferent of what happens to that mind. That is its ugly, ruthless side towards a human being, it is a monster of whom nothing can be made. But there is sweetness in its low notes, when the sun is hot and your ears are half deaf with grateful sleep.

Then the dainty mermaids which live in the depths of those salt waters come up, though they may not actually show themselves, fearful lest they be mistaken for the sea-serpent. They look at you from under water, one after the other, dear, dripping elves, for they want to

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

attract attention. Everything that is pretty, from a woman to a bird, courts admiration, and should get it. You dream on maybe, but you know the deep sea mermaids are there. Perhaps you even fear to awaken yourself, lest you frighten them away.

You told me of a land fairy once saying to those children of the world whose love affairs were in her hands, "My dears, there is a sure manner for the choosing of a bride or bridegroom. You are given so many to choose from and you choose them as they sleep. You suddenly awaken one, then another, and as each, being disturbed in sleep, behaves, so will you judge that person. The girl or youth who wakens with a frown, or an exclamation of impatience at being disturbed, is to be left alone for ever and ever. But he or she who, minding not the disturbance, wakes with a smile, is to be instantly taken in marriage."

It is a fairy story which I like to apply to the salt-sheen mermaids of my deck dreams. I can hear them, when they think I cannot, whispering to each other, "Will he waken nicely, or will he waken surly. If he wakens nicely we

SECRETS OF THE SEA

want him down with us, but if he wakens surly, no, not at all shall we have him."

You know how a bunch of young girls at a ball whisper secretly to each other when the young men are arriving, wonderful whispering, token of opening hearts and instincts. Well, that is just how the mermaids do, cajoling there in maiden modesty, with the fine linen of the sea foam in which to hide their confusion. It is the mermaids' attention to men, for you must not doubt a moment as to their being mermaids in the Atlantic. Never be a doubter; it is a mean occupation unworthy of the company of sea fairies.

They were calling last night when I was thinking of you, and I went out to hear their message. The night was aflame with stars, the sea a movement of black-blue, tipped with ribbons of white where a wave broke, shot with a thousand lights where the phosphorous leapt about the ship. How wonderful in radiance are those phosphorescent night-lights as the steamer churns them from the sea. They suggest a sea-power lamp, if we could only capture it, which would illumine the whole world. They resemble a long crackle of

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

matches, except that each seems to have a different gleam of colour. Rather they have a different mingling of all the colours of the rainbow, bursting forth in the darkness of night. What do they know of the sea and its wonders who only know it by daylight ?

There is an adage that evil deeds love the darkness, and it may be half a truth, like most other adages. But some of the most beautiful things of life and nature have kinship with darkness, in particular with half darkness, the gloaming, the dusk, when the day is losing itself in the night. Is not the time to propose, if you are to have a happy married life, that hour between the "gloamin' and the mirk," when the world appears to halt, to drop its noise, so that you may whisper and be heard ? That is when a whisper carries far and rarely falls on deaf ears, the fate of the loud-mouthed word. It is in the "still, small voice" that you may hear the footfall of fate, if you will only hearken well. But folk have a way of reading mystery into a whisper, the whisper, for example, of a pair of lovers who are merely telling each other the old, old story.

The average sea passenger is concerned less

SECRETS OF THE SEA

with its mysteries than with what he shall put on to please himself and—the ladies. They, in turn, find the same delectable duty the best remedy yet invented, either to prevent or to cure seasickness. Confine a woman's interest within a becoming frock and she is well armoured against seasickness.

A woman with charm and bloom has been in tears because she misunderstood the nature of an Atlantic voyage in the summer and sent all her fine clothes down into the hold, keeping only old ones for ship wear. "Stupid of me," she said, when she saw the sun bring forth a fine array of sea toilets, "but my old clothes will not hide myself, anyway." It is not every woman who learns readily that necessity may not only be the mother of invention but of personal success. The men got to know of the tragedy of my lady's frocks and she has been the most attended woman on the ship. Sympathy, thy name is man !

But the sea, as the sea, has perhaps not much to say to the woman, whether she be afloat on it, or, in thought, following some voyager. Possession is the ultimate test with a woman, certainly the sense of possessing the one man

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

and all that concerns him. To have that man go away, is to unpossess him for the time being. He cannot be seen, because like the Spanish fleet of the song, he is not in sight. We say that, though lost to sight, we are to memory dear, but the woman would far rather have the sight than the memory. She does not care to give promissory notes either on the bank of love or the bank of marriage.

Was it this instinct of possession which set a sweet woman we know to buying household gods long ago ? Get the furniture and it is a guarantee of the husband ; is that the woman's unspoken, unadmitted thought ? We men can never hope really to understand you, and dull the world would become if we could. You are its splendid gamble, its eternal surprise, and you are so delightfully unconscious of the fact. Was it not Stevenson who said to somebody in trouble with the domestic fates, " It's the women, I suppose ! Well, but you know what women are ? " And then, reflectively, " No ; I'm —— if any of us do ! "

Moreover unpossession, anyhow when it means absence, is alarming to a woman. She reads many terrors into it. You saw it a black

SECRETS OF THE SEA

cloud into which I was to disappear, a cloud that might never let me out again. Instead it has been a revelation of the beauty, softness, tenderness of the sea, with, to be sure, a background of its deadliness when angry. You would have enjoyed the sea and all your fears would have melted under its influence, because you would have actually seen it, not merely imagined a distorted vision of it, and because you would have retained possession—of myself.

We human folk, when we are parted, mostly estimate each other's thoughts aright, but we rarely contrive to imagine each other's surroundings. We know how a mind, a heart, intimate to ours, will work; we cannot know the scenes amid which fortune has cast the absent one. Thus do we afford ourselves many a bitter hour when there is no real reason for it. Still, anxiety is a test of affection, a burning, searing test, if you like, but a purifying one.

If you can let the well-beloved go out into the hazards of travel, without watching and waiting to hear of his safe arrival, why, it were better he should not return, best for him and best for you. Then, indeed, would it be better to set out than to arrive, to start on a

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

journey than to come home again, because there would be no home. There can be no welcome home for a man long away which does not have in it the happy sob of a woman, or the surprised cry of a child. It is these that "make the happy fireside clime" for him, though, poor fellow, he often does not know it, and therein is to blame because that lamp needs to be kept burning.

The sea traveller is not given to anxieties, for the other reason that the breath of its life communicates to him a reinforced and reinvigorated physical life. Now this very morning you awoke in a mansion in the sky in London and maybe the sun was shining but you could not see it. You had to ask the maid, when she brought the awakening cup of tea, what the weather was like. "Can't say very well, miss," I fancied the answer, "looks mixed, this morning, miss." That is frequently the weather outlook in London, fair to moderate, anyhow the favourite prophecy about it, and it is often what we have to say about ourselves, how we find life—fair to moderate, thank you!

Now with me here, the long moan of the sea, cooing to its fathoms deep, was the last sound

SECRETS OF THE SEA

in my ears when I fell asleep. It was also the first sound when I awoke, a new man, after a short six hours' rest. "Six hours sleep for a man, seven for a woman and eight for a fool," says an ancient prescription on that subject. "Yes," said a Parliamentary once, "and I need eight myself." He would not, if he had been making a sea voyage and kept hearty. Nature would have been rested in him far sooner than that, and he would have arisen refreshed, almost before his head had dented the pillow.

The mountain air has its splendours, it is cool and bracing, but it is less rich in the elements of life than the air of the sea. Besides its tonic power, the sea has a courting softness which makes you feel beautifully lonesome, if you are not one of those people who, when alone, get lonely, a poor achievement for a man or woman with a soul. The mountain air tightens the sinews, the sea air fills the veins; it has more of the awesome, the spiritual, aye and of the physical. Heaven and hell the sea harbours, while the mountains are content with the call of the wild.

Your sailing man inured to the sea knows what mysteries and surprises are held in its

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

winds and waters. He knows that he does not know and that if he were to sail the Seven Seas for ever he never would learn all. Casually I asked our captain, a quiet man with the wonder of forty sea years in his eyes, when we should end our voyage. He would only say that, all being well, we should do so at such and such a time. He promised nothing definite, because he is intimate with the unforeseen at sea, storm or fog, iceberg or a broken engine. It never gives us its last surprise, being there a woman; never strikes its last blow, being there veritably the old man of the sea.

Do we, in our quest for the mystery of existence, consider the sea enough? Our wise men live ashore and seek the supreme secrets there, where only half of them may lie. Let them try the great, unfathomable ocean, not only for what it contains of plant and fish life, for its buoyancy and health-giving properties, but for its part in the making and the holding together of the universe of the emotions? May the very secret of human life, of what gives life, not be found full fifty fathoms deep, in the workings of the sea? It is there the dead men lie, but in death we are also in life.

VII. A CITY THAT NEVER SLEEPS

WHEN a mother has a boy going away for the first time, to live in a big city, she is acutely concerned about him. She wants to feel that he will be comfortable, that he will keep his health, that he will get on. But there is a greater anxiety than that ; she wonders with herself if he will be safe.

She does not tell him what she means by that, but instead talks warningly of the possibility of his being run over in a crowded street. She is really thinking of the companions he will make, the people who will become his intimates ; first the young men, but, far more, the young women.

She knows, as every woman's instinct tells her, that the fortunes of her boy intimately lie there. He will return some day, though never to fill the place he has left vacant at her hearth and in her heart. Will it be with the bride she also can take to her arms, or will he return alone, the burnt-out, doomed ember of a passion ? She fears her own sex for her boy's sake, knowing that, whether women vote or not at political polls, they have the casting vote with men's lives all the time. This is one of

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

the high ordeals of motherhood, and it may be that the same chain hangs at the heart of every true woman who has somebody adventuring into a strange city like New York, where the goodness of time now finds me.

You sail in from the Atlantic and you behold sky-cleaving buildings, each one higher than the other, running away in a long well-defined line of many colours, all assertive, and that is New York. It almost hits you with its sharp angles and its raw colours, for both seem to govern the buildings as you look at them. But gradually, while you glide up the spacious, noisy waters of the fine natural harbour on which New York sits, your eye begins to harmonise what it sees, to group one "sky-scraper" with another, as if they were a range of mountains, and then you get a continuous, abiding city.

It is all new to an Old World eye, or rather it is new one degree removed. You imagine a New York which easily nestled down to its surroundings in the time of the Dutch and English colonists, a place in which sea and land naturally met and blended. Then you fancy a future day when the citizens of that place

A CITY THAT NEVER SLEEPS

said to themselves, "We can no more find room as we are ; we must build a city on fresh lines." Straightway they would begin, and thus would arise modern New York, of whose outward life, as I have now seen it, I shall try to tell you, with a word of report about my own doings thrown in.

"When," I innocently asked the hotel clerk, "do you shut the doors, what is the closing hour ?" He looked at me with surprise. "Perhaps," he answered, quoting laconically, "'When the last trumpet's awful voice, This rending earth shall shake !' Perhaps, perhaps not ; a hotel never shuts its doors in New York, unless it must." Yes, a New York hotel is open all the twenty-four hours of the day, and there, as I suggest, it typifies a city which never sleeps. Not that literally, human nature even in America needing rest and refreshment, but certainly here is a city which sleeps less than any other capital of the world.

The sign and signal of this sleeplessness you will see in the "Great White Way," as the New Yorkers call the central part of Broadway at night. You might be amid hundreds of searchlights, and each betokens some haven,

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

or a harbour of distress, as the case may be, a gorgeous hotel, a swaggering restaurant, a bohemian café, a dancing palace, or a mere drinking saloon. Glare and glitter, tobacco and the colour of wine, hours so late as to become early again—that is the “Great White Way.” It blazes at the night, crudely, brazenly, and there is nothing in it of the “light that never was on sea or land.”

Please understand that New York, like Paris, like London, is cosmopolitan in its peoples and in their employments and amusements. You ask the way of a passer-by who wears a suit of unquestionable American cut, and shoes with bumpy American toes, and he cannot answer you in English. Of all cities New York is probably the most cosmopolitan in its population and “transients”—an American word with a clear meaning, like most American words. It is also a city in which thousands of folk are constantly making holiday, a city, therefore, of pleasure as well as of work, though the latter note is most present by far. They work hard in New York, and when the play-hours come they play hard.

“What are you doing to-night?” “No-

A CITY THAT NEVER SLEEPS

thing in particular ! ” “ Join us at dinner at half-past six, then come to the theatre, and afterwards go to supper.” There you get your bill of fare for the evening from some hospitable friend. He is not content with one thing for your evening’s entertainment, as we would be in London—a small dinner, the play, or a peck of supper and talk.

He, himself, has probably been working twelve hours a day for a week, without a break, and he feels that he and you may as well have a good break. “ Break-out,” you chide him gently, and he merely laughs and says, “ Perhaps we do crowd our hospitality overmuch. We fling it wholesale at our friends, squeeze it all into a night, instead of dispensing it in agreeable fragments as you do in the Old World. Possibly we still have to learn something of the art of living—quite possibly.”

Perhaps it is that Americans merely make a pretence of eating steaks and Welsh rarebits for late supper, and so get through harmlessly ? Not at all ; they are, as were the Highlanders of old, good trencher-men and women ; honest eaters of honest, well-cooked food, which costs an extravagant price at the hotels and

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

restaurants. Big prices and big portions, and the first fact is a temptation to eat the second, which is generally enough for two. But that is where you would reckon without your host, the climate of America, which, somehow, has a most digestive edge.

It can be humid in New York on occasion, soakingly hot, but natively it is crisp and stimulating, like dry champagne, which, by the way, is little drunk in America. America has a sweet tooth, especially the women, and one asks if this characteristic springs originally from a splendid supply of fruits. No country in the world grows such a wealth of fruit, and for that matter vegetables within her own borders. She has so many million acres that the sun is always shining on some of them, ripening the gifts of Nature to men. This plentitude of fruit and vegetable may also have to do with the notable abstinence of Americans from stimulants at meal times.

Sober in its drink is ordinary America, if floods of iced-water and a frequency of cocktails are excepted ; sober, for another reason, because the climate has stimulus enough. Are you thirsty, as you may be on a hot day ? Then

A CITY THAT NEVER SLEEPS

you are given a glass of iced water, and you become as fond of it, after a time, as you do of the glass of boiling water drunk at home before breakfast; or you will get a "soft drink," meaning one in which there is no alcohol. When I said to an American friend, "You people never seem to use a walking-stick," he replied, with a laugh, "Of course not; we don't need it!" It is a small thing, the absence of the walking-stick, but it belongs to the American's motto, never, in the hustle of life, to carry unnecessary cargo. Or is it just that he has not fallen into the habit of cultivating this silent comrade of a restful hour, though he is patient with an umbrella, an instrument which has tried the temper of men ever since it was invented.

A quick, living climate, a complete devotion to practical business, to the great game of getting on, and a corresponding earnestness when a "night off" comes along; these are three things which keep New York "wakerif" as the Scots say. Many of their words are current coin in America, particularly "Ehum," which you can spell in several ways but pronounce only in one. There is something

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

leisurely, undecided, in the "little word 'Ehum,' which stands for an 'Aye'" and yet need not, and it is good to hear it in the mouth of hurrying America.

Was there not once a Scots breach of promise case which turned on "Ehum." The Americans, having appropriated the word itself, might, in that small legal affair, find the making of a good American story. "When she gae me a hint o' marriage," said the faithless, ungallant Scot, "I only said 'Ehum,' naething mair than that." But the judge thought that enough, with other circumstances needless to mention, and made him pay damages. When he heard the judgment he said "Ehum," forgetful what it had just cost him.

"Ehum" also says New York, which rises early, often sits up late, rejoices in early and late hours, and prospers in them, although it is not right that a copybook maxim should be outraged even in the New World. As an industrial machine it goes all night as well as all day, this city of steel and brickwork; Alps, made by the hands of men; a city strong and forceful, unlike any other in appearance, but naturally at home on the solid rock of Man-

A CITY THAT NEVER SLEEPS

hattan Island, from which it springs heavenward. New Yorkers say, jokingly—and at least they joke without difficulty—that they get nearer heaven now than other people, however it may be later. We may allow them that comfort without a grudge.

You will be sleeping twenty storeys up, but all night, if you listen, you will hear the whistle of steamers as they come and go in the harbour, on the rivers, and they grow friendly. More than once, perhaps, you will look from your window, and even if it be dead of night you will witness below New York still in a blaze of colour and activity. She is working, working, working, playing, playing, playing, and when one limb of her goes to sleep, the other wakens up.

The web of American railways which converges on New York, keeps active, and you will hear a train start from the Grand Central or the Pennsylvania stations—no, depots!—with a low rumble, like the bay of a hound bent on a far, fast run. The trains of the “Subway” clink along underground, carrying full loads, first of late home-getters, then of early workers. The surface trams rattle and jolt, and pull up now and then with a crunch, as if they were

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

angry at being stopped. They are the most perfect of rest-breakers during the night, the completest nerve wreckers during the day, and moreover, they are conspicuously slow. Once, in the early tramway age, New York was ahead with street transportation. Now, in an age of the London motor 'bus, it is very much behind, and it will have to think over the destiny of those "surface cars."

Occasionally a dull roar, as if it were the going-off of a Dreadnought gun, will salute the night. Somewhere the primæval Manhattan rock is being blasted for a foundation to a new "sky-scraper." Somewhere else an army of men are building another "sky-scraper," and how they clatter, clatter with their hammers. It pays to get that building up in quick time and let out for offices. Business is business, and New York works long hours so that her men may grow rich, or merely old, while still young; so that her women may dress well and be, with their good figures, their charm of conversation, and their brightness of manner, conquering wherever they go.

You do not, somehow, seem to need such a long night's sleep in New York as you do in

A CITY THAT NEVER SLEEPS

London. There, again, the restful, restoring quality of the sea may tell, for it laves Manhattan Island. Go north to the Arctic Circle, explorers tell you, and an hour's sleep is worth two in England, so deep and sound is it, thanks to the purity of the atmosphere. Well, New York has none of the repose of the Arctic Circle, and some of that might not be amiss, but its air has remarkable powers of revival. It re-charges the wearied body and brain in record time. Whether it does not also wear them out sooner, may be a matter for thought. You cannot have it both ways, and it is in a lively atmosphere that a candle burns most quickly, if also most brightly.

Probably Americans would tell you that in a land where things move swiftly, where chances pass in a driving cloud of circumstance, never to return again, the victory is oftener for the swift than for the enduring. This does not mean that character counts for less, because ever it is the pivot which decides the fortunes of a man or a nation. What it means is that with personality there must go rapid decision, even at the risk, here and there, of the wrong decision.

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

That brings me to the quick, ebullient American temperament, which is the outcome of its surroundings, nervous, overstrung, but intuitive. You associate it with the raspy, straining noise of New York, as you would associate our slow-moving, long-thinking way, with the massive roar of London. Also you associate it with the full, searchlight atmosphere of New York, a light which has no shadows, from which you cannot take shelter when the sun is hot, in contrast with the cloudy, overcast but soothing light of London Town. It is a temperament, that of America, which often leaps the stiles, instead of troubling to undo them bar by bar. Perhaps it is the fear of making a leap in the dark that causes New York to sleep o' nights with one eye open.

VIII. A SEARCH FOR A SOUL

IT is an unusual thing to come upon a soul, the spiritual essence of a man or of a place. Souls are scarce and, being intangible, they are hard to discover when they do exist. Moreover the finer they are the more they resist being discovered. The spirit of the other world shrinks from the materialism of this.

Perhaps that is why the soul of New York baffles one who, having surveyed its outwardness, and communicated the result to you, my comrade in travel-thought and more, next goes in search of its inwardness. The personality, the atmosphere of London, really its soul, is something definite to the true Londoner. It makes itself felt in him and he could almost analyse its contest of history and actuality.

You will find it in Westminster Abbey, comforting you when you step into that fane of the centuries for half an hour's communion with yourself. Is there any church which so retains the after-glow of this world and the promised light of the future as Westminster Abbey? Equally you will find the soul of London beside the grave of Oliver

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

Goldsmith in the tree-shaded Temple. It is under the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral, in a hundred historic corners, glowing and eternal, the soul of the past.

The other half of London's soul, that of the present, you may capture in the traffic of Piccadilly, the roaring bustle of the Strand, or the street commerce outside the Mansion House and the Bank of England. Nay, this soul, a mingling of what has been, with what is to-day, is almost something you might catch at given stations as you would a "tube" train. You need imagination to catch it, because it is of the things that never were in hard substance, and if you have no imagination, and do not desire it, do you live?

In New York imagination leaves you at fault, and when you consult the authorities, whether the serious writer or the novelist, you get little assistance. The characters of a novel of New York may be lodged within its boundaries, but they do not seem to be of it. They are real enough, so far as they go, but they do not take you to the soul's treasure-house of this city in being. It will probably be unveiled when the great American novel of long promise

A SEARCH FOR A SOUL

comes to be written. Meanwhile, let us go in search of it, by taking a walk down Fifth Avenue, the finest, fairest street in New York, and therefore the most likely place in which to look for its soul.

A British eye makes an unconscious contrast between the life of Fifth Avenue and that of London's Piccadilly or Edinburgh's Princes Street. There is a common sense of spaciousness, of distance, as between Fifth Avenue and Princes Street, both thoroughfares of fashion. You get the same far lift, and the clearness of atmosphere in each city emphasises it. No gray castle, hot-pot of history ages gone, frowns upon Fifth Avenue, but you can people a palatial "store" with that magic. One of them, at least, would, with its beauty of architecture reflected in marble, be a fit palace for many wonders. Art has taken hold of the architecture of Fifth Avenue, and the genius of the American architect is solving the problem of how to make the high building beautiful.

With Piccadilly, a gift of time, even more than Scott's Princes Street, Fifth Avenue has no likeness. Piccadilly is short and sweet, Fifth Avenue long and luxurious, particularly

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

when the sun shines upon it, warming its cool stones into a strong, brusque harmony of colour. We, on this side of the Atlantic, have no such scheme of street colour, and with our darker tones could have none. It would look garish, out of setting, but in New York, where the light simply leaps at you, it is in place.

If you were to take Piccadilly, Bond Street and Regent Street, and throw them into a widened Oxford Street, you might have Fifth Avenue and more besides. You would have a like swing of impressive street, though it would still not be the same in mileage, and always there would be the sombre tints of London in contrast with New York's bolder light. There can be few secrets in a land which has such a bright light, and that makes against romance. It may also explain why all things, including chapters from the Bible, get into the American papers. Oh, to be a country without secrets!

You have, of an evening when the sun is setting, seen the turrets of St. Stephen's at Westminster rise shadowy into a soft, filmy Thames haze. An American novelist who looked on that picture would not leave it while it lasted. You would not see a haze like that

A SEARCH FOR A SOUL

in New York, which has few half-effects in anything. Perhaps the soul of London is best expressed in this veil lighted by the dying sun, as if a human soul were making a pageant to the Islands of the Blest, of which we dream and hope.

Essentially New York is a place of hope, but maybe it is a "this world" rather than an "other-world," hope. It takes the view, which bold preachers sometimes recommend to men, that the true preparation for the next world is to live this life highly. Its abundant hope speaks in the stream of human commerce which pours along the ladies' mile of Fifth Avenue. You notice that here, to a marked degree, is an Adamless street; it is in fief to woman, and finely she adorns it, as she goes her shopping way or pays her social calls. But this Adamless state of Fifth Avenue, the comparative absence of the man, is in sharp contrast to the fashion thoroughfares, the peacock parades of the European capitals, and that is worth inquiring about.

The explanation, no doubt, is that the Old World has a class of men who have nothing better to do than dress well and amuse them-

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

selves. They waken weary, and say, "What can I do to-day, how shall I fill it up?" They are pitiable, in contrast to the other man, the real happy warrior, who leaps from his bed saying, "How am I to get through all this day's work?" You have them by the score, young men and old-young men in Rotten Row of a fine forenoon, in Piccadilly or Bond Street of an afternoon. They are taking the air of fashion, they are out for admiration, certainly to admire if they chance on any encouragement, philanderers on campaign. Those well-dressed men of pleasure are not a valuable asset to a city, but they give it variety and even a touch of elegance.

Now America, as yet, has no merely idle, decorative class and she is better without it. It is fearful to think of a society which passes the idle nobody to its boudoirs and rejects the thinker or the worker, which opens the door to the whisper of "Private means" and closes it to achievement. But with women, who are the Peris at those enticing gates, manners maketh the man, and they have their case, even if it be based on selfishness. The well-dressed, do-nothing-but-be-nice young man appeals to

A SEARCH FOR A SOUL

the physical sense at its highest, gratifies it in women, with whom it often comes before godliness. An occasional dandy, with nothing to do, will be met in Fifth Avenue, and he may be a herald of a multitude to arrive when the American millionaire is older by a generation.

The only thing in favour of the change is that it would mean an even division of men and women in the passing show of Fifth Avenue. At present the women there have the "guidin' o' it," on the surface as well as at the heart, and out of that arises a curious circumstance ; the absence of any steady buzz of talk among the wayfarers, such as you may hear on the footways, say, of Regent Street. It is kindly, this buzz of conversation, your ear welcomes it, and always from it may come the personal word for you. An old familiar face may emerge from the past, or a new one may swim into your ken ; either way conferring on you that extra throb of interest, of expectation, which means life, as apart from existence.

Is it that Americans are less confirmed gossips than the English, that they have no small talk to exchange when they take their walks abroad ? Is it that they do not have to

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

discuss the trophies of a shop outside the windows, as we must, but can walk freely inside and inspect them, buying or not buying as may be ? Is it that Americans are content when they have on their best clothes to look and be looked at without any more ado ?

No ; it is the departed man, who is “ down-town ” making money instead of helping his women folk to spend it in Fifth Avenue. He would say that they need no help, and he would probably be right. He might even argue that “ down-town ” he is in his right place as a worker, and you can only agree with him. But you miss him, his coat, his hat and his man’s resigned air, in the crowd of fashionable Fifth Avenue, a street in which you, with your eye for character, and your love of fresh effects, would delight.

It may appear a bold thing to say, but a couple of women out together soon exhaust their chatter. They are a walking contradiction to the truism, “ Two’s company ; three’s none.” If you are walking you must speak clearly, in order to be heard, and the mainstay of a woman’s talk is the whisper, the nod and the look, all of which are for indoor purposes.

A SEARCH FOR A SOUL

But let a man and woman go wayfaring and they have more to say to each other that can stand the publicity of being overheard. The commonplaces take a deal of exhausting, if a man and woman be at all of a communion, and there is the unsaid talk, the sweet unspoken nothings, coming in as often as the uttered words.

It is a pretty campaign in London for women to get their men folk out as escorts and then casually happen upon beautiful clothes, or a precious jewel in windows never lighted upon before, or only one day before ! There has been the suggestion, dropped into the teacup with the lump of sugar at breakfast : “ You said, dear, that as business is not very busy, you would be leaving the office early to-day.” He had not said that, but he has learned that “ Yes, dear ! ” is an excellent motto on which to let a loving wife revolve, so he mutters, “ Yes, dear,” as he turns the paper.

“ Then couldn’t I,” she goes on, “ come and meet you, and we’ll have a look at the West End shops together ; I haven’t seen them for ever so long ! ” “ Yes, dear ! ” says he, taking up his hat and umbrella, and the contract is

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

made. In the afternoon it is honoured, but he thinks it an odd coincidence that during a single West End walk he and his wife should have fallen upon beauty baubles of which she says, "Why, dear, I have been looking for these ever since we were married ; so strange to find them now, and I'm so happy. And isn't it the anniversary of our engagement, and you had forgotten that, you dear, stupid man !"

Of such charming commerce one sees little outwardly in Fifth Avenue, but, never fear, the effective equivalent will exist in some form. When Husband Jonathan learns to cultivate a little leisure, he will probably fall into this dalliance, being lured to it unknowingly. He will always regard it as a waste of time, and meanwhile, anyhow, he delivers the money and lets Mrs. Jonathan get the goods. Husband John Bull, with his older sense of proprietorship in wives, wants to see the goods delivered. Both are good fellows to their womenkind, but Jonathan gives his a longer shopping day because he goes earlier to his office than John.

By ten o'clock, if the weather be fair, you will find Fifth Avenue nimble with trig shoppers, each tripping after some aid to beauty,

A SEARCH FOR A SOUL

as women have done since Eve put the apple-blossom in her hair. The American girl must rise with the lark to get her frock on so perfectly at that time of day ; only this is her secret. The stranger is content to admire, if she will allow him, but she appears to be mightily indifferent about the matter.

Is she actually indifferent, or is it her manner, as much as to say, " Do not touch the statue ! " She is very self-contained, very decisive, very dependable, as she takes her way among the multitude. She looks for what she wants, that and that only, and then passes on to the next business. No motive gives swiftness to a woman's foot like the quest of a new gown or a new hat, except it be a tryst with her well-beloved. Then the modern way is to take a taxi-cab and let him pay on delivery, a transaction which is more expensive in New York than in London.

One misses, in Fifth Avenue, the ocean of hired and hireable " taxis " which flows through fashion-land in London. A " taxi " is a luxury even in Fifth Avenue, the street of millionaires and luxurious ladies. However a fleet of motor-buses, which the New Yorkers

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

call "stages," short for stage-coaches, meanders up and down it with a lazy leisure which suits the sightseer. Their style and bearing suggest the Ark and recall an image which you will find in an old child's book, whose author was charged with religious heresy on their account :

"The birds, beasts and fishes came out one by one ;

' Dash it,' said Noah, ' they'll never be done ! ' "

But there is no heresy in the Fifth Avenue "stage," no running away from anything, nothing desperate. Still when your feet tire on the hard, sun-blistered pavements, you can mount its roof and go all the way for ten cents, twisting your head heavenward at the "sky-scrapers," "rubber-necking," as the Americans say, with their complete disregard for melody in a term so long as they get the exact meaning.

Has it struck anybody that New York's "sky-scrapers " may have some relationship to the modes in which her women dress ? Is that style the big hat, with floating plumes, and the skirt with no more space within it than the wearer needs for walking ? One wonders, not being of any certainty in those fair mysteries, but confident that a distinctive note of American dress, as of American literature, is

A SEARCH FOR A SOUL

slowly evolving. Comfort and elegance are the two notes that determine clothes, and the American woman and the American man apply them to their climate, their habits, and their own characteristics of physique. You accept the sartorial result as what Fifth Avenue should wear, but you miss from it something which is frequent in London; an eye of sympathy, of possible comradeship, the roving eye which proclaims that wonder is still alive in the Old World, however it may be in the New World.

“Ships that pass in the night,” throwing a gleam of interest to each other and then going on their several charted or uncharted ways! There is a beautiful thought in that, as one voyages through the seas of life; the hail and farewell of instinctively kindred souls who are yet strangers. It is like bells singing a melody in the air and being sung back to by a companionship of good spirits. If you miss it from the brilliant pageant which is called Fifth Avenue, that, perhaps, is a reason why you also miss the soul of New York; because it is not yet in sight.

IX. PERSONALITY AND STORIES

YOU may read a country's history in the faces of its people, just as you would a man's life in his eyes ; something of that history, anyhow, its great happenings. Do you remember saying that to me, and my answer that you may even read the future of a people in their personality, how they look, how they comport themselves, what they say and what they do not say. This is the more important in the case of America, because, wonderful as her past has been, she is only coming to her full place in the world.

If it is the colour of the past that calls anybody, storied cities, ancient cathedrals, old gardens fragrant of the youth of mankind, he need not cross the Atlantic for them, even in the summer, when it is usually an ocean of rest and restfulness. No ; he should go into the waysides of the Old World, as the Americans, being a shrewd people and sometimes in need of rest, do themselves.

But if he thinks that man is man's most interesting study, that possible gleams into the future are as good to get as the lights of long ago, then assuredly he should try America. It

PERSONALITY AND STORIES

still runs full-speed ahead, and it still has an open mind as to the goal, so here is a crying interest for you, who like to follow human progress even in my poor epistles.

You cannot see all America in a few weeks, but if you follow my plan you will manage to decipher some real pages of its life within that time. The saying, wrongly attributed to Dr. Samuel Johnson, "Let us take a walk down Fleet Street!" sounds a commonplace. But often a commonplace is concentrated wisdom; and that is how, in our careless day, a master of the commonplace gets to be regarded as an oracle. If you want to understand a people, to catch the note to which they march, just do take a walk—many walks—in their great highways of traffic.

We had such a walk in New York's fine Fifth Avenue, and since then I have been wandering up and down the chief streets of other great American cities, with an occasional dip into the country, looking on, seeing what I could see, always from the simple but vital standpoint of human nature. What one gets is an impression, not material for a ripe judgment; but often the wayfarer sees things which

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

are hidden from others, or, at all events, sees them differently.

America is a perfect host, informal in manner, generous of heart, kindly in everything, willing to take you at your own value. It puts you up for its clubs, bids you make yourself at home and is frankly glad to have you. There is genuine good-fellowship everywhere, if only you will grip it by the hand as unpretendingly as it is offered. You are asked to have and to hold, and the request is entirely meant.

We in London are not so hospitable ; we do not throw open our doors so quickly, but stand a little on the order of our doing the thing. It is our innate awkwardness, nothing worse ; but could America not teach us in club deportment ? “ Come right in,” says the American, “ come now ! ”—and from that moment you might, if you choose, almost live on the country, as great generals did when they invaded foreign lands in olden times. It is charming, cousinly, all this ; to have even the “ sky-scrapers ” say “ Welcome ! ”

But there is a sort of “ Britisher ”—the American word covering us islanders, and yet meaning especially an Englishman—who is not

PERSONALITY AND STORIES

very welcome, and unfortunately we send too many of him over the Atlantic. That is the Englishman to whom nothing American seems good and who rudely says so. He may, himself, have left his country and his family for both their sakes, or he may be an almighty travelling person, but in either case he does harm. We are especially wronged, however, by the English visitor, man or woman, who is insolently "superior," who patronises America, puts on airs which fill a plain, hearty people with anger.

Two incidents which have come within my own knowledge will illustrate this indictment. An English colonel was sitting in the smoke-room of an Atlantic liner, when an American gentleman, who had met him before, but was not recognised, came up and said, "Happy to see you again, Mr. ——" "My name is Colonel ——" was the gruff response; and the American turned away with a flush on his face. "It is such a pity," said the teller of this incident, "that we don't all do ourselves justice when we visit America. I sometimes think there should be an examination in manners, as well as of trunks, before travellers are allowed to land in other countries."

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

The second incident concerns a lady, a quite nice English lady, who had never been across the Atlantic before, and was brimful of our national prejudices. She was interviewing a ship's purser about the declaration which you have to sign before you may enter America. There are two forms of declaration ; one for an American citizen, one for the foreigner ; and he had that in mind when he asked, " Are you an American ? " " Do I look like it ? " she asked. Well, she was standing in front of a bunch of dainty American women, and the contrast was too cruel—she did not look an American.

King Edward, the perfect English traveller, was all-popular in America, although he was only there in his youth. One hears as much at any turn, and, indeed, when he died, the American evidences of sorrow were so many that it might have been America herself which had lost an honoured man and a historic figure.

" It isn't," a well-known American said to me, " that we take much stock in kings as such ; we don't, but we understand how fine a constitutional sovereign King Edward was, and what worthy work he did for the world.

PERSONALITY AND STORIES

Above all, we feel that he was a good fellow, a good sportsman in every walk of life, a man who, being set on a throne, yet remained entirely human. It was this quality which attracted Americans to King Edward; and if it had been possible for him to visit America during his too-short reign, why, he would have had a welcome to make the world talk."

The Americans like a clear-cut man, a personality, somebody with character, and they value heart as much as they value mind, wherein they are more than right. You can always interest two or three Americans by talking about King Edward, even if you have not much fresh to tell them. Stories cross the seas as strangely, but as truly, as news is carried on the winds of the desert, and there is a delicious one of King Edward and that king of democrats, Mr. John Burns, who had been on a visit to Sandringham.

His royal host said, "Oh, Mr. Burns, I have been trying, in my own little way, during the winter, whether I could not do something for the unemployed. I have employed a number of men in making changes and improvements

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

on the Sandringham estate, and perhaps you would come and have a look at the work.” “Certainly, sir,” said the President of the Local Government Board ; “and if I approve what you have done, I might give you a grant from my fund for the unemployed !” King Edward laughed, and, saying “Your fund !” laughed again, loud and merrily.

Americans will ask, too, about King George, and declare, “Well, if he’ll only come to America, he and his Queen, we’ll give them the time of their lives.” Of that there can be no possible doubt, and Washington, America’s capital, is very beautiful and gracious, about June, before the heat of summer has scorched the trees and driven the Diplomatic Corps to the seaside. Such a visit, if it were possible, would be a fit hall-mark stamped on the Ambassadorship of Mr. James Bryce. For he has quietly done precious things in bringing together yet more closely the two great English-speaking nations, whose cordial union means so much in the future peace and happiness of the world at large.

When Lord Morley went to America, away back in 1867, his comrade in letters, George

PERSONALITY AND STORIES

Meredith, wrote a poem entitled "Lines to a Friend Visiting America." It said :

"We send our worthiest ; can nō less,
If we would nōw be read aright . . ."

That is the spirit in which the Americans have regarded Mr. Bryce's presence among them. You can always tell how a man stands with his private circle, or with a nation, by the way in which his name is mentioned, and the Americans say, simply and sincerely, "James Bryce." It is a personal tribute, something greater and better even than being the author of *The American Commonwealth*, a scholar and writer of the same lofty line that America sent us in her Russell Lowells and John Hays. "We like him," said President Taft, whom I have seen for a little at the White House ; and surely there can be no harm in repeating the remark.

A bright flow of conversation, fresh, crisp, but very safely discreet ; a large, genial presence, surmounted by a purposeful head thatched with brown hair growing grey ; a roguish eye, full of humour and laughter, as well as of the seriousness of things ; a hand,

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

small and yet caressing, like a woman's—that is President Taft. A complete surgeon, Lord Rosebery once said, must have the heart of a hero and the hand of a lady. You think of that in relation to President Taft, whose natural charm would make a successful bedside manner for half a dozen surgeons and doctors. You decide at once that he is the man who sees things through, the consolidator of judicial mind, the completer of the bridge and ford rather than the “blaizer” of a trail. You can take his “pair of sparkling eyes”—a dainty phrase by Gilbert!—and the solid head, in token of that.

Constantly in America you perceive the regard which the average citizen has for character and the natural man. You may have many faults—in fact, you should have some, rather than be a plaster saint of virtues—but interestingness you must have and “side” you must not have. No Englishman has left a sweeter memory among our American kinsfolk than Henry Irving, who, mannerist as he sometimes was on the stage, was never anything but natural off it. Americans delight in stories of those they like, and a brace of new

PERSONALITY AND STORIES

ones touching Irving have fallen into my wallet—slight stories, but Irvingish.

A bugle sounds, to call the hungry and the less hungry, half an hour before breakfast on an Atlantic steamer. A young bugler was accustomed to make his first blast at a spot where Irving's cabin-suite happened to be. The "drowsy morn" had twice been waked in this fashion for the famous actor, who was in no special hurry to greet it. On the third morning a poetic head, which streamed down into a long, lank figure and a dressing-gown, came out of the cabin-door and exclaimed, "Dear bugler boy, you blow beautifully and I love your music. But I should love it still better if you would blow at the other end of the ship." The head disappeared, and so did the bugler, richer by a word from Henry Irving.

My second anecdote also relates to him on a liner which was having rough weather and jumping about a bit. He was dining in his sitting-room, where suddenly a special heave of the vessel caused a tumult. Somebody ran in, and there lay crockery and dinner on the floor, with Irving standing over the disaster.

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

He had a bottle in his hand, and he said, triumphantly, "Anyhow, I have saved the Scotch whisky."

Mr. Theodore Roosevelt's popularity with the mass of his countrymen is largely because he is a natural man, as well as a strong man—a plain man and no nonsense. He does not live in a glass house, and therefore he can afford to throw stones, or so he might be expected to reason. What he thinks he says, and perhaps he finds it easier to speak than to be silent; certainly, he does not, in the language of a famous Irish telegram, "hesitate to shoot," and if somebody gets hit now and then, it cannot be helped. He means business, and he knows his brother Americans well enough to know that, with them, the shortest road to a goal is usually the surest road.

"Don't you in your speeches," Mr. Roosevelt was asked at a quiet dinner party, "sometimes use caricature?" "Yes, perhaps," he answered; and then, after thinking for a moment, he added, "No, not caricature; but I speak in bill-posters, on to a large canvas." A shrewd piece of self-observation, for Mr. Roosevelt is, perhaps, greater in the vigour, the

PERSONALITY AND STORIES

conqueringness of his personality, than as a thinker.

“He’s not,” said a conductor on a Pennsylvania express to me, “the same as other politicians who, when they rise, forget that they still remain servants of the country and human beings. If he walked into this train he would talk to me exactly as you are doing, a man-to-man talk and no nonsense. He would say, ‘Hullo, how are you?’ and I would tell him, and we would have a pleasant, frank word together. He’s all right, the Colonel.”

And he is a “bonnie fighter,” as take another small anecdote. A friend met him, after a candidate whom he supported for a state governorship had been badly beaten. Mr. Roosevelt had been spending an hour of the outdoor life which he loves, and, for ease, was jacketless. “I see,” said his friend, “you have taken off your coat.” “Yes,” was the laughing reply, and, extracting his hands from a pair of long, heavy, leather gloves, he added, “I’ll be taking off the gloves next.”

Mr. Roosevelt himself tells with lively eye and the constant gleam of his excellent set of teeth, another story which is characteristic of

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

the man. It happened while he was in Cuba at the head of his Rough Riders. Supplies ran short and there came a day when the Roosevelt men had nothing to eat. He heard somehow, for he hears most things, that a cargo of beans had arrived, and he set out to secure some of them. Red tape put him off again and again; but he always returned to the charge and in the end "I got the beans; I got the beans!"

The spirit of the fathers of the American Republic found individual expression in George Washington's simple grandeur of personality. The moral conflict of the Civil War was humanly expressed in Abraham Lincoln, a moral hero. Generally, a national epoch enshrines itself in a man, even if, for that purpose, he has to be somewhat idealised. Is it that the modern spirit of America, her invincible vigour, her unquenchable optimism, her pride in what she has done, her desire to do more, on perhaps larger world-lines, with greater thought for the world's well-being as well as America's; is it that so many of Mr. Roosevelt's countrymen see in his personality an expression of this modern national spirit, and for that reason salute him?

PERSONALITY AND STORIES

His association with the historic Presidents of America is already more or less accepted. That has been nobody's work ; it has happened, as a tradition grows under the bellows of public opinion. But at the office of the American journal for which he writes, I was shown three modest, plainly comfortable rooms that make his housing as a journalist. One was for visitors, the second for his secretary, the third for himself. You looked from the windows of this last room upon a "sky-scraper " going heavenward, with all the clatter and nerve-ruin that attend that progress in New York. You turned round towards the solid, spacious desk in the middle of the floor, and your eye lifted to walls covered with a soothing paper of art green. On them were hung large portraits of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, and nothing else. There would, of course, be a third great President when Mr. Roosevelt sat in his chair.

Most likely this meeting of the quick and the dead was an accident, not design on the part of whoever arranged the room, and Mr. Roosevelt would be unconscious of it all. But there it was, eloquently suggestive of history-making in

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

America with more, perhaps, to come. For if George Washington founded America, and Abraham Lincoln made her morally, by slaying the dragon of slavery, it remains for somebody else to give her people the full, free happiness of democracy.

X. A MIRROR OF CHARACTER

W E British have, as a nation, proud moods and humble moods, we "feel good" with ourselves and bad with ourselves, exactly as you or I do. How should it be otherwise, for a nation is only the character expression of the people who form it—"St. George and Merrie England!"

You can scarcely, as yet, speak of "Merrie America" in the sense which we attach to the qualifying word in its old English spelling. Certainly in the cities, large and small, life is too strenuous for that. The American man, with his lithe, sinewy, active figure, and his keen, quick face, is built to be strenuous.

You will see big, fleshy Americans, but not often fat Americans, for they do not seem to run to that. No doubt an active life in body and mind, stimulated by the dry and, after a time, almost wizening climate, is responsible for this. It is only when you sit down to rest that you begin to feel you need a rest.

The American, the city man again, has still to learn our Old World virtue of leisure. He knows the value of it perfectly well, but when he wants it he usually comes over to us, saying,

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

“Why, I’ll get out of my office atmosphere altogether and have a real holiday.”

A rich American walked on board an outgoing liner with this resolution strong in him, and during the voyage he spent thirty pounds in wireless telegrams, keeping in touch with the stock market. He would have done better to go to Philadelphia, which sarcastic New Yorkers declare they do when they want to sleep. Well, Philadelphia can reply that it is not only a city of American history, for the Republic was proclaimed there, but a city in which most citizens have their own houses, a city of homes as well as of Quaker traditions.

“Step lively!” cries the conductor of an American street car, and you learn to find a national significance in the cry. But perhaps it is not so much the pace that kills, although it may be quite rapid, as the long working hours. You not only find the offices and shops open by eight or nine o’clock in the morning, but the principals on the spot to do business. They keep going until well into the evening, and they get home tired, to await the rumble of another day calling them. Business may be business, but you can have too much

A MIRROR OF CHARACTER

of it for the good of yourself and those about you.

Life as an organised machine is more perfect in America than with us, but this very fact makes against the softening personal note. All that happy invention, smooth, swift-running mechanism, a perfect genius for organisation, can do, you will find ; but we have more individual comfort, more restfulness ; we count more as gods in the car. And I have heard it urged that we win through our work with, in the result, as much dispatch and efficiency. We " get there " in about the same time, even if there has been less shouting to each other on the way. We are a curiously silent people ; the Americans are vocal.

You work and say little about it in our heavy London atmosphere, whereas in New York you can work and talk at the same time. It is an advantage to be able to do two things at once, and especially to do both well, which, notwithstanding the jack-of-all-trades legend, is possible. The very dryness of the American air tickles your tongue into talking, and the nerves of your throat into talking quickly and eagerly. Then sound carries so much further in a dry,

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

clear atmosphere that you may easily find words crashing out aloud which, in London, would hardly be more than a whisper. America is not a whispering gallery, but a sounding board, where, to be heard, it is necessary to speak up, even if you grow hoarse.

It is the climate and the man, also the physical surroundings and the man ; and how could it be different ? The eminently fit New Yorker personally illustrates the thought that his city is built upon a rock—there, at least, living up to the Scriptural injunction ; and that the steeple-like “sky-scrapers” rise quite securely from his solid Manhattan peninsula. Its very limited breadth makes the “sky-scraper” inevitable, because there was no other direction in which to go, and bed-rock made it possible. Then the fineness of American light pierces into a “sky-scraper” canyon which, with us, in London anyhow, would, at the best, be a region of dimness, and in dull weather of sheer blackness.

But my point is the appropriateness of the American, set against those surroundings ; his clear-cut squareness, as if he were just part of them, to all the winds which blow. Why, he is

A MIRROR OF CHARACTER

even clothed squarely, with comfort for his loose figure, and coolness in the heat, to recommend the plan ; full shoulders to his jacket, no invading waist—query, has he a waist ?—trousers cut spherically, downward, as it were, like a spinning-top, and, if the wearer be really fashionable, turned up over the shoes. That trick, which advertises the many shapes and qualities of the American boot, is, perhaps, borrowed from our shores, but the crease to the trouser is America's gift to the world at large.

Nothing is more perfect than the crease of a New York policeman's trouser, unless it be the whole get-up of his mounted comrade, who controls the wheeled traffic at busy points. He sits his beautiful bay horse like a statue, and it is positively restful, in the garish fever, in the clamour and clink of Broadway, to look at him. Why don't Americans draw a breath now and then and do that ? They cannot, or say they cannot, spare time to hie them to a mossy bank, sit on it, and look the sun in the face. But this man in the blue tunic and the riding breeches, this trim figure, observant in eye, cool, almost indifferent in every action, is America's knight of the street, and he merits notice.

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

You may have noted that one sees better looking downward than looking upward, possibly because the strain, being less on the eye, it gathers in more. But somehow we all prefer to look upward, and it is a healthy habit. If somebody is on horse-back we have, of course, to look up to him ; but why do we feel that we are looking up in another sense ? Maybe it is merely that the more highly placed person, by the physical act of looking down, feels an advantage in a conversation and makes it felt.

Would this explain in any measure why the American woman, being set on a throne by her menfolk, is the better conversationalist, not less witty than they, and often better informed, unless—thank goodness for this mercy!—on stocks and shares ? She has, especially if she lives in a hotel or in an “apartment,” which we call a flat, leisure to read and think should she want to do so. He, poor fellow, is always, in the recurring American phrase, “going some.” He “gets busy ” and keeps busy, or thinks he does, and the wear and tear are the same either way.

He begins, however, like the women of America, to consider the question of afternoon

A MIRROR OF CHARACTER

tea, and the tea shop is springing up all over the country. Once, and that not so long ago, a restaurant would offer you a "high-ball"—American for whisky and soda—to quench your afternoon thirst, if you happened to be a man, and an iced lemonade if you were a woman. Now you can get tea readily enough, though it costs more than its humble price with us, not to speak of the "tips," which the army of foreign waiters in America almost exact.

The golden American age when there were no "tips" is no more; they are universal and lordly, thanks partly to the fact that some Americans are better at making money than spending it. They fling it about them, "light come, light go," finding a barbarous joy in doing so, and simply destroying the waiter as waiter. But still you can take afternoon tea comfortably, and it is ever an influence for a leisure hour. That is an item gained for a merry, sociable America, in which all the time shall not be spent on work, high pressure pleasure, or sleep.

When afternoon tea has fully possessed the land, the American man will be its steadfast champion, because he is accommodating and

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

good natured in all things which please his womenfolk. There dwells a kindly, latent twinkle in his eyes, and you can readily tempt it into a smile, which spreads over his purposeful face like a morning sun. He kicks against some of the conventions and is a slave to more, but whether he be doing one thing or the other, he remains himself and interesting. He will not put on his straw hat until a given date in summer, even if the weather be hot. On the other hand he will invert all the traditions of some material task out of existence, and see it through swiftly in his own fashion.

Why the American should nearly always shave bare is not conclusively apparent, because there are faces which gain in good looks and character by the presence of a moustache or a beard. Four women of four ages discussed this round a dinner-table to the provocative remark, "Don't you like moustached men better than bare-faced men; is it not more romantic?" No; they were for the razor across the faces of American men. "You can see what you're kissing then," said one of them, and that was conclusive.

It is a national habit, now associated with a

A MIRROR OF CHARACTER

national type, and the American barber grows rich as a consequence. "You feel clean," said an American friend to me; adding, "a shave and a brush-up in our country is as good as getting into evening-clothes in yours and less troublesome." Never does your typical, clean-shaved American look better than in evening-dress, with his old-fashioned watch-fob, his pearl studs and links—no gold and glitter, please! But he hates the bother of it, or pretends to; for, mind you, the vanity of looking well is in men, Americans included, almost as inherent as it is in women.

But you ask me, naturally enough, to tell you more about the "well-dressedness" of the American woman. "And is she," you add, "really better dressed on the average, than the average English woman?" Style in dress is largely a matter of opinion, and generalisations on any big human subject are not very useful. But since you want my, by this time, more experienced ideas on this business, what can I say? Only, in perhaps different words, what I have already told you.

Would it convey a clear, definite meaning to you if I repeat that in England we have a

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

limited upper company of men and women who, for artistry in dress, would stand first anywhere ; but that, when it comes to the greater company, America would beat us, if not in her men's clothes, most emphatically in those of her women, and the elegance with which they are worn ? It is a common saying that the American woman can put on her clothes, that somehow she makes them look part of herself, the frame of a charming living picture, not so many folds piled above each other, which is the impression that an Englishwoman often gives. She gets a faint resemblance to a pillow and its sleepiness may even extend to herself, which is a pity.

A delightful American lady, old enough to be granted freedom of debate in these affairs, said to an equally delightful old English lady, in my hearing, " My dear, your countrywomen wear too many petticoats, and so miss the trim shapeliness of the American girl or matron." Awesome, was it not, that remark, but it was fresh, thoughtful, had point.

Too many petticoats ! That seems sound criticism, as you will agree if you work out the difference between the elegant, the smart

A MIRROR OF CHARACTER

woman in London and the other woman. It is shapeliness as against a bundle; natural beauty adorned, without being buried in wraps, as the method was in the Victorian days. A woman might show her shoulders then—and Queen Victoria herself had beautiful shoulders—but she had to hide her ankles in a bundle of lollopy petticoats.

However, the Englishwoman is getting over the antimacassar tradition as applied to her own delightful self. She does not want gowns to hang upon her as if she were a clothes-horse, even up and down, which, truth to tell, she pretty frequently is. If Providence has given her that sort of “English figure”—which once was the “correct thing,” but always was unwomanly because not like a woman—she now enters a protest in favour of curves and beauty spots. To her the flowing white petticoat is no longer the emblem of good dressing she was taught to think it, however clean it may look. She is putting her pin-money on nice shoes and nicer stockings, which will stand a glance and even court it. She is learning that the lines of a tailor-made frock do the “human form divine” the highest justice. In fine she dresses better

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

than her mother and infinitely better than her grandmother, because she dresses with Nature instead of being ashamed of Nature.

“Such colouring, such hair, so fresh, like a flower !” That has traditionally been the older Englishwoman’s tribute to her matchless girl sister. But rarer was there mention of figure, of grace of carriage, until the present generation of young Englishwomen bloomed upon us. They are, as they say themselves, “dressing differently,” even “doing up” their hair in original styles, and that is the last word in daring, is it not ?

There, perhaps, they have learned something from the American girl, who has the courage of original ways, always, however, directed to the end that she shall be herself. This self-reliance gives her vivacity, charm of manner and the air of conquest which carries her through the world. Sometimes she hesitates but she is never lost ; and yet she can be awkward, unsure of herself, a result, may I suggest, of the “brother-sisterly” manner in which she is brought up.

XI. THE AMERICAN MAID & MAN

“**B**ROTHER-sisterliness !” you exclaim ; adding, “ what’s that ? Something peculiarly American, like cocktails and clams ? ” Not like them at all, but peculiarly American ; only here, I fancy, is a fresh page in any review of American character and temperament, and it needs an epistle to itself. But how to set it down ?

The boy—what will he become ? It is a question which the mothers of sons think every minute, round and round the world. The girl—what will she become ? That is a still more vital question, but it is not so all-present. The boy stands broadly for the physical, the material well-being and progress of the world. The girl holds in her heart its moral welfare, its immortal soul, which is infinitely more important. Well or ill, good or bad, it is the woman who counts, though the world of man will not frankly admit the fact.

Let us see how those trusts for eternity are being borne by the American girl and the American boy, because they are not brought up in our familiar Old World ways. They go to school together, go out to work side by side, are

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

companions and friends in childhood, "good fellows" towards each other as they grow older. It is a new model in the relationship of the sexes, this "brother-sisterliness"; a system of, maybe, large human gains, and yet, on the other hand, possibly of some losses.

It gains for a nation the strength a river has that flows in unbroken communion to the sea. On that tide every bark sails freely, bringing its argosy of ideas, its freight of effort accomplished, to be drawn upon for the common good. It was a fine thing, even if it was not completely true, to say, in the language of the Declaration of American Independence, that all men are born equal before God. It has been a still finer thing to hold that all men and women are born equal, and that they shall march forward together, brothers and sisters in achievement. This was a working partnership which began when America was young and had to call all her human resources, men and women, to her material development.

But there was bound to come a time when the losses of the gains would be felt, because the women of a country are firstly its soul-keepers, the flower, the bloom of a nation, and

THE AMERICAN MAID AND MAN

ought to be so regarded. What, in an individual or a community, are the elements of soul but wonder and faith and reverence? The renascence of a lost wonder is the re-birth of spirituality, the recovery of one's soul. To sail with wonder, pursue faith, and to be filled with reverence for both, you need a river which does not always flow in single majesty, but in streams that run away from each other and return, gathering, by this circumstance, colour, fragrance, spirituality. If, being scattered, they lose in sheer strength of water-power, they capture the Nature soul of a wider region and thus sparkle with a richer personality, for, after the Lord above, it is the earth beneath which enriches mankind with spirituality.

The "brother-sisterliness" of America means plain and prosperous national sailing, but may it not, for that very reason, also mean missing the colour of character and the splendour of the storm? The perfume of mystery which fills the air between the sexes in the Old World carries with it a want of comradeship, the easy, delightful American communion between the sexes which is platonic and beautiful. But does it not breathe romance,

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

sentiment, that something spiritual, that poetry of the soul, which you miss in America ?

She has one voice that is still ; still, anyhow, in many of her men, and among too many of her women, where it only needs to be cried into being. Sentimental America is to a degree ; but how far has she sentiment ? Between the two there lies a great divide, such as in scenery separates regions of the American continent from each other.

The smallest, youngest American is a big patriot, wearing his flag on the lapel of his jacket, rejoicing in his country's glorious name. Didn't George Washington live ? And he never told a lie, or hardly ever, for it is best to make that qualification about the father of a nation. You cannot go nation building and tell the truth and nothing but the truth, all the time, or, if you do, you fail, while George Washington succeeded splendidly. You watch young George Washington sailing away from his native shores for the first time in his life, and his sentimentality overflows in natural demonstrativeness. You wish, though, that the little fellow would burst into tears, which, being the dew of the human heart, would be sentiment.

THE AMERICAN MAID AND MAN

During all the time I have been in America, I have never, I think, and it is a sorry confession, seen anybody, woman or man, in tears. That is a notable tribute to her well-offness, a land of plenty, to her abundant spirits, to the sureness with which she looks in her mirror of fate ; and yet tears are from the soul. Simple nature set free, whether in joy or sorrow, is always good to meet, a sign of quiet sincerity ; and there is even company in a being in distress, in suffering.

Now America is probably richer in her women than any other land, and is she quite—her men-folk, I mean—doing them justice ? A surprising question ! Perhaps, at the first sound of it ; for what do American men not do for American women ? They are all devotion and chivalry ; they slave from morning till night ; they pile up money so that my lady may spend it on beautiful clothes and in having a “ good time,” which, usually, is just a splendid romp without a stroke of hazard in it. Model fathers, brothers, husbands—what would she have ? She scarcely knows herself, perhaps, and yet instinct tells her.

Why, my dear American, yourself ! More

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

of your personal companionship, as well as your devotion ; more talk from you, small talk about the things which interest women, and fewer hours spent away in the office "down town." You must learn that your wife has a soul to keep alive, to cultivate as music to the spheres, besides a body to keep beautiful. Let the physical temple be perfect, fragrant with health and purity, but even so the mind and the soul are the holy of holies. Neglect is, in all forms of life, the highest and the lowest, the gateway to decline, and a woman's spirituality needs nourishment if it is to flourish.

A swift automobile—your word for our motor-car—even if you have mortgaged your life-insurance policy to buy it, is not enough ; or, rather, it is too much. Perhaps it has not occurred to you that you are missing the real blossom of life, and causing her to miss it also, which is still worse, because a woman has an inalienable right to those heights, however it be with a man. Gaining the whole world, and losing your own soul and wasting a woman's, your wife's !

Is the game of money, or what you really like, for you are no miser, the power which

THE AMERICAN MAID AND MAN

money brings, worth that candle ? Surely it is not. You remember the man who went away sorrowfully, having great possessions ? He was intended as a warning and you might usefully think him over and, in a short quick, expressive word which you often use, " quit " his ways. We are only certain of one life though we hope unceasingly for another, and we should make the most, the highest of it.

These are almost the words in which a brilliant American lady put, for my benefit, what she called the real, the urgent woman question in America ; a question, she insisted, far more clamant and vital than votes for women, though that now is well a-wing in the Great Republic. She holds that American girls often marry Old World men because they find them more companionable, with more understanding of women than Americans cultivate, and not merely for gew-gaw titles, although to be sure these count somewhat. They would count not at all, she insists, if American men would only trouble themselves a trifle more about their women folk on the Old World model of intimate comradeship.

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

She has travelled, she has observed, and possibly there is something in her point of view.

“Our men,” she said to me, “spoil us with kindness, and yet undervalue us. They are the kindest men in the whole world, but really there must be in them somewhere a particular survival of the barbaric idea that a woman’s chief end is to be a pretty plaything. They come home at night loaded with a day’s further riches, which are all for us if we like—for diamonds, for a season in Europe, for what will please us. But the bearers of those gifts are so utterly tired out in the winning of them that, after dinner, they can only go to sleep, or to a vaudeville play. They bring the gifts, not the glad tidings ; by which I mean, Oh ! that they would come home hours earlier, carrying fewer sheaves in the form of an increased bank balance, but the greater treasure of leisure to sit down beside us, their hands in ours, and talk the world and ourselves over.”

She added finely that she often thought with envy of a story of Robert Louis Stevenson and his wife ; how they once sat up all night talking, and never knew it until morning came. By and by it may be so in America, where the

THE AMERICAN MAID AND MAN

women have a wit, a sparkle, a cajolery with them which might drive both dull care and sleep away. They never miss the give and take of good dinner-table conversation, and perhaps that is part of the "brother-sisterly" social system. But with all its good comradeship, a thing of infinite worth, as may freely be said, it yet yields results that are sometimes artificial.

Take the over-good, "unco' guid" heroine, as the Scots would say, of the average American novel, who is a "brother-sisterly" product. You think her an impossible being as you meet her, time and again, in the American story, for she sails blithely into impossible situations and blithely out of them. She takes every conceivable risk, flouting the chances which would utterly destroy maidens of another race, and ever she wins triumphantly through. Nothing happens to unprotected virtue; from its shining face all the devilries of the world rush off in headlong route; which, you declare, and the history of frail, passion-driven manhood and womanhood backs you up, is not real life.

Clearly it is not, but spend a while in America, and you will understand the genesis of this very winning heroine, and her relation-

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

ship to the Code American. Within it there are no risks, because she is an enthroned innocent ; it is when she steps outside, and only then, that trouble may come, and this distinction is hard to show in a novel. So that heroine gets trying, uninteresting, when you have had a spell of her on paper. But in actuality she is never either, possibly because ; well, because, after all, flesh and blood may not be so coldly perfect as the American novelists would, on occasion, have us believe.

The fount and origin of the " brother-sisterly " trouble, in so far as it runs against the grain of Nature, may perhaps be found in " Sister " with a capital " S." But who, you will wonder, is she, and I am going to tell you, because " Sister " is a highly placed personage in America. She has much to do with the " guidin' o't " in the American house, or " apartment," or hotel and, in fine, is a real domestic power.

" Sister " is the name given to the girl of a family and very, very often there seems to be only one girl. Among some aboriginal peoples girls were put out of life almost before they had entered it, lest there should be too many

THE AMERICAN MAID AND MAN

of them ; anyhow to encourage the boys. There is no need for that in America, because girls do not appear to arrive, only " Sister."

She is " Sister " to father, mother, and brother, and the very word means an attitude towards her which is not always wholesome. It tends to spoil her, but, worst of all, it makes her into a grown woman while in years she is still a child. She has her chair at table, she goes to theatres, she is even taken out to dinner, and she wears jewellery when she should have a rattle.

A vision of a little maiden of this sort remains with me, from our voyage across the Atlantic to America. She was probably ten, certainly not more than twelve, but this was her second Atlantic journey all alone. She had been to school in France and was going home to her family for the holidays. She did her hair up in two prim little bunches above the ears. She had her frocks for the various meals, she picked her dishes from the menu with deliberation, she was all composure and assurance.

It struck me as sad that anybody so very young should have so old, so managing an

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

expression of face. Why, at times you almost saw sadness in her eyes, and yet, away from the dinner-table, she romped and played as blithely as a maiden should. Nay, the day before we reached land, she took her hair out of its old-maidish rings and let it fall over her shoulders. Then she looked joyous, the child she was, and the change in her did other people as well as herself good.

“Sister” is the product of an American domestic system which does not provide nurseries or gardens wherein she may jump about, and remain the baby as long as ever she can. If you are living the cramped life of a hotel or a flat, “Sister” necessarily comes into all the “grown-up” side of it. This is a pity for herself and for the “grown-ups,” and the mystery is how she contrives, when womanhood comes, to forget it all and be the natural woman which is America’s finest possession. She will, this American woman, be a still greater asset to her country when she has taught the American man how to utilise fully the glories of womanhood which reside in her.

Famous empires of the past have danced at the altar of sex wizardry to their destruction.

THE AMERICAN MAID AND MAN

It would be strange if a great modern Republic were, by shutting out the divine flame, to run a like risk. Think of a country with so cold, so unromantic, so unilluminated a sex-passion, that it might forget the Biblical command to replenish the earth. It is unthinkable, because it would be to sit away from Mother Nature, who is alike beauty and wisdom.

XII. COUNTRY LIFE IS SWEET !

THERE is something in the country that always warms the heart to it, wherever one may be. It must be its peacefulness, its sense of rest, its balm to the jaded mind and body.

Perhaps it is that Nature ultimately is more to the life, certainly to the spiritual life of man, than a high civilisation, which, after all, is also a high artificiality. Nature says "Come to me, leave the captains and the shouting, and capture the glory of peace."

You will have known the joy it is, after a week's racket of London Town, to awaken in a country retreat and listen for the noise which does not come. You listen and listen, being almost afraid that it will come, and then you turn on your pillow again and dream yourself asleep. You are in a palace of beautiful vacancy and you only want to be let alone, as each of us does now and then.

This flight from town to country is keenly welcome in America, because its cities have a harshness of noise which wears greatly. It is still welcome, although the country in America does not, somehow, seem to contain all the

COUNTRY LIFE IS SWEET !

sweetness of the country in England. It has more grandeurs, more wonderful sights, supreamer feats of Nature, but it has not the same earth magic, or at least that has been my feeling.

You may never, perhaps, have travelled by an Atlantic liner train from Southampton to London, or from Liverpool to London. Your company would be a crowd of eager Americans, many of them in England for the first time. What takes them is the quiet beauty of the country, which they drink in, as if it were a revelation. "Why," they say to each other, "it's all one garden ; so cute, so natty, so ordered, so finished."

That last word, I think, describes the essential difference between our English country and American country. Ours is finished ; theirs is rawer, rougher, not so lovable, not so near to the heart. The contrast will come home to you if you suppose it is the difference between a woman in a tweed frock and that same woman in a dress of soft, simple stuff which nestles about her.

There must be a god of the rural country—wild, wayward Pan for want of a better—who

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

needs ages to get his spirit into its soil. The magic of the earth has to be cultivated, spade-worked into being, and some god is the gardener. A farmer takes in new land gradually, planting the stronger crops in it first. Then, as it purifies itself of the dross, and the elixir which was deep down quickens, he passes on to the more delicate crops. So, we can fancy it is with Pan the Gardener, and he has the different countries of the world in different states of forwardness.

A countryside, like a people, has to be martyred, soaked with the deeds of history, before its inherent sap arrives at the full flower. Now America is too big to have yet undergone this process as little England, Scotland and Ireland have been through it. Moreover America came into the world when the world had more or less become civilised and settled. Further it came from the Red Man who had scant pages of history to hand over with his title-deeds.

We evolved with many a clash and tumult, in the small life of ancient times, when he took who had the power and he kept who could. Out of tribes and petty kingships contesting

COUNTRY LIFE IS SWEET !

with each other, came a colour and variety of human nature which big, modern states cannot themselves give. America arrived a nation, rather than grew slowly with the centuries, and her countrysides have still, in our full, intimate sense of the thing, to be peopled. Therefore the magic of the past, a golden bowl holding the present, is not there to seize you.

There is no American Robin Hood of song and his merry men to fill the glades with the music of their horns, no bold Rob Roy, in one's imagination, to send round the fiery cross. The grand rovers and raiders of America came on the scene so late in time that they were merely strung up to a tree, when they could be caught, as villains and vagabonds. Civilisation makes sad sacrifices to the picturesque, but you cannot eat your dinner in security and at the same time entertain Robin Hood or Rob Roy.

You cry to the grand places of American scenery but they do not cry you back any human message. Nobody has been there scoring them with the blood of murder, the smoke of rapine, the romance of love brought to castle gates by a young gallant, riding hard,

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

or the tragedy of love forced on another man's wife at the point of the sword. You do not hear, through the echoes of the ages, a Scottish "Edom o' Gordon" singing beneath the castle walls of his absent enemy :

" 'Cum down to me, ye lady fair,
Cum down to me ; let's see :
This night ye's ly by my ain side,
The morn my bride sall be.' "

Nor do you hear the loyal wife's fine defiance, an epic for time and the woman, flung at that flaming challenge :

" 'I winna cum down, ye fals Gordon,
I winna cum down to thee ;
I winna forsake my ain dear lord,
That is sae far frae me.' "

That drama touches the imagination and it also touches the central tide of life, men and women in their troubled mission of carrying on life. Thus are we intrigued by the "human document" which must ever lie at the heart of the picturesque. You cannot have romance without blood and tears as well as love and marriage, for it is a composite banquet. And to give a countryside aroma romance must be old, rose

COUNTRY LIFE IS SWEET !

leaves which you can stir and only send up the perfume, not the coarseness which has vanished.

Good and grateful is the American country, for where, to take a near instance, can the majestic banks of the Hudson be matched ? The kindness of New England is beyond praise, and the spirit of Thoreau, Longfellow, Hawthorne, Whittier, Emerson, and gentle Wendell Holmes is in its gleam and shade. One can only dream of the splendour of the Rocky Mountains, the mightiness of the Yellowstone Park, or the lapped shores of California, sloping down to the Pacific. But there remains absent the indefinable something, that silent chorus of a country's soul and body, which you have in Surrey or Kent, in Devon or Cornwall, by the braes of Loch Lomond or the banks of Killarney.

Maybe the missing of this in America is the defect of one's insularity, for we each look for things as the training of our instinct orders us, with the result that we overlook them, which we should not do if we looked in another, right way. However it be I have not discovered myself sitting on an American fence, nodding at a blinking sun making patterns on tree and

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

grass and humming to myself the haunting words of " John Peel " with their perfect scent of an English shire :

" Do ye ken John Peel in his coat so gray ?
Do ye ken John Peel at the break of day ?
Do you ken John Peel when he's far, far away,
With his horn and his hounds in the morning ? "

Sport in the American country, like everything else, is bigger, on a larger scale than with us, as, indeed, befits a land of very broad acres. It is every man's, in some form, for the taking; and the fisherman, anyhow, need never be scarce of his hobby where there are hills and dales and the mirth of running waters. But somehow I should expect an American angler to ride to his sport, by " buggy," train, or motor-car, not to walk to it. The American is never, or hardly ever, a walker, and quite likely this failing—he will not mind that way of putting it—is in a measure attributable to the " unwalkableness " of the American country. It is counted in distances, and you have not the swift changes of scenery which we get in England.

Turn a corner with us and you are in a fresh land, but in America Nature has built on a

COUNTRY LIFE IS SWEET !

larger, longer scale, and that is what I mean when I say its countryside is "unwalkable" as compared with ours. Its effect, after a stay in roaring New York or crashing Chicago, is comforting, because there is clean air to breathe, blue space to look into, altogether a bodily wash-up, as well as a spiritual refreshment. There are trees, though they have not the English lustre of green, there is grass, also less freshly green than ours, there is a wonderful show of wild flowers and fruits, and the birds and the animals are plentiful. But the call to walk in the midst of it all is not there, as we know the call in England, and that involves a loss of intimacy with Nature, though again, thanks to the law of the contrary, a force not sufficiently recognised, America has a rich Nature literature.

Our country-cottage habit, if we actually began it, has a wide vogue in America, with the modifications made necessary by the difference in the "trivial round, the common task" of the two nations. You do not regard palaces by the seaside or among the mountains as having any real part in American country life. They are merely the abiding places, for a time, of the

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

rich and the fashionable who have transferred themselves from the cities. But the professional man who makes his living in town and seeks rest on a farm, or at a genuine little house in the country, is very frequent. He may even be so placed that he can, during the heat of summer, transfer his home to the country. He will have a horse, if he cannot afford a motor, and anyhow he has joy in his habitation.

It is delightful to have the hospitality of an American home in the country, for individually, as well as collectively, Americans are charming hosts. They have a knack of getting interesting folk together even when these are scattered over a whole range of country, and here the unromantic motor comes in beneficially. They are full of good talk, not merely on affairs of the time, but on what always interests, the characteristics of the locality. "Jokes go round and careless chat" to the sauce of well cooked if simple food; for in cooking, the American household, when it is a household and not a transient camp, is nearly always accomplished.

There is nothing selfish in praising good food, and the American hostess, ever harassed with

COUNTRY LIFE IS SWEET !

the problem of servants, and probably finding salvation in Negro maids, attends with a sound knowledge to her kitchen and her table. She may not spend hours in the kitchen as an English woman will, unless she and her daughters are doing their own cooking, a frequent thing. But she knows what she has ordered into that kitchen and what ought to come out of it. The idea that anything is good enough to eat when you are in the country is not an accepted American idea. Nor does the American woman let herself fall into dowdiness then, but keeps the flag of elegance and trigness flying.

Set half-a-dozen well-dressed women, partnered with the necessary men, round a shining table in a bungalow, and you have a picture in simple charm which a town palace could not supply. The American woman never forgets to look her best even when, as one dear lady jokingly said to me, she has no "best." She was a Southerner, a trifle impatient with the hustle of her Northern Yankee sisters, and she said it with an accent as soft as a kiss.

Even so, she had informed views about serious America, and she told me, what one

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

often hears, that the essential work of the Republic now, and her fortunes in the future, lie chiefly with the country people; her farmers, her other workers on the land, all those who live in constant intercourse with Mother Earth. That may be said of every nation, but it especially applies to America, which can still grow enough food to feed all its millions of people, whereas we live largely by the sea. The man in hodden grey who rears beef or wheat is a treasure beyond price to America, and in her heart she honours him and seeks his friendship in the country.

But a popular American novelist, now no more, loved city life so well and country life so little, that he once did a strange thing. His publisher had, after many days, got him to accept a "week-end" engagement for the country, the "week-end" being now popular in America. To secure the implementing, as they say in Scots law, of the engagement, the wily publisher bound the innocent novelist down to a certain afternoon train, which he, the publisher, would personally meet at the country end. Early that morning he had a telegram from his author saying, "Profoundly

COUNTRY LIFE IS SWEET !

sorry, but I have missed the three-fifteen train " !

A country life was not sweet to that novelist, or it may have been that he disliked the railway journey. The American train is not adapted to the plan, " I'll take a little run into the country and walk back." It is almost the heaviest thing in America, in fact curiously heavy in contrast with the volatile American temperament. It was built for long journeys over rough country, in extremes of heat and cold. That being the conditions it has to encounter, it is entirely suited for them, and on it you can command every sort of luxury, at a price, and a good deal of jolting without price.

Its motion differs from that of a European train, and this, I am told, is explained by two things. One is the great length and high tonnage of the cars, the other the circumstance that, on many American railways anyhow, the rail is spiked to the sleeper, not bolted. A spike may move a little as a wheel passes, and this results in a looser, more scattered action as between train and track than you get when you have the rail and the sleeper bolted together and gently bending in company.

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

If you listen as you ride you will notice that the “clinkite-clinkite-clink” of the English train is not the music played by the American train. Its note is deeper, longer, more burdened, less lightsome to the ear, more sonorous. You hear it differently according to whether you are in a Pullman berth courting sleep, in an ordinary carriage unable to get it, or, if the time be day, dissipating in the lounge-chair of a parlour car, with an observation platform behind, where you may get the wind, not to mention the dust, and watch the country reel by.

An agreeable quality of the American train, arising from the fact that you can always walk from one end to the other, is its sociability. Americans are free and easy, glad to pass the time of day with you, and you would be thought a sour Englishman if you sat down to lunch on a train and remained silent towards your neighbours. The conversational opening is easy enough, and on one journey it has borne me into a quite special talk with a young American lady, who was—oh yes!—comely to look at across the table. She had never been to England and asked me about it, saying she understood that

COUNTRY LIFE IS SWEET !

the English were stiff and humourless but that the Scots and the Irish were better. Then she told me, not directly, but incidentally about herself, all without the least self-consciousness. She had been married a year to a husband who was everything to her. They had had a tiff, more than a tiff, and she was travelling to join him after a parting of two months. Everything had been forgiven ; the “ everything ” being that she had flirted desperately with a nice young man who came to reside near her husband and herself. There was no harm in it—not a bit !—but he was a pleasant fellow and her husband was often away on business.

Her explanation of her little adventure—this for her own satisfaction rather than to me—was that she had married while she was only a girl, which indeed she remained ; that the natural woman’s curiosity in her about love and romance had never had its fling, and that—well, there was the whole story ! She thought, with a quaint mixture of repentance and the right of possessing her husband, that all would now be well, but showed a misdoubt when she said, as we rose from the table : My husband’s safe : I’m the proposition ! ”

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She was the breath of honest frankness, for intrigue is little in the clear American air, little in American women, and one's comment was, "If she's the proposition, she's worth the solving, and good luck to them both on their life's pilgrimage."

XIII. POLITICS IN THE REPUBLIC

YOU say you do not care for politics, that they are a machine which has often confused the onward march of the world, a game played over the bodies and souls of humanity. It is a severe indictment, but, even so, I am going to tell you a little about American politics, because they have never been more interesting.

You shrug your shoulders, perhaps after dinner when, being in your finest evening gown, the shrug will not be overlooked, but still you will read on. Certainly you will, if I tell you of a young woman with a blue hat and a good figure, who has been making an American political convention dance to her music. She stepped on to the floor of the meeting-place, waved a flag, marched around, cheering her candidate for the Presidency, and in a few minutes the convention was at her mercy. It even liked her want of bashfulness and became a mart of noise, shouting, demonstration, anything but serious politics.

All the time, though, the men who pull the strings were in side-rooms pulling them, and the rest was merely the escape of so much

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steam. That is the way of American politics ; they are flamboyant, highly coloured on the surface, but down where the machinery hides, cool heads and adaptable hands are scheming and planning ; only great things are happening in this Israel called America.

A far-flung change is preparing in the politics and institutions of America, and the newest Presidential Election is the undoubted sign of it. Progress has been working while the political captains have been scheming, and the writing on the wall begins to appear. Its letters are faint, unformed, have no running sense as yet, but ever another flickers into its place, like an advertisement thrown against the sky-line.

Much dust, many confoundings there are, for when a nation stirs those are the first tokens of the fact. Old forms trail themselves away with the clangour of so many ghosts in chains. They make the greater a noise out of their very emptiness, their deadness, their terror of the unknown. Yes, it may be said of the political turmoil in America :

“This battle fares like the morning’s war
When dying clouds contend with growing light.”

One must be in America to understand well

POLITICS IN THE REPUBLIC

what is happening, because only the causes are active, and news, as we get it in the papers, waits upon events and effects, being the record of them. Even here, one can only get a general idea of things, so deep and manifold are they, and it may be wrong in many details. But it is guided by talks which I have had alike with eminent Americans and with the American "man in the street," the fellow who is making the politicians reconsider their cards.

They have kept him at bay for a long time, but he is lifting up his voice and he means it to be heard from Maine to California. He has not "arrived," but he is more nearly "arrived" than he has ever been before, and he presses forward, banging almost into the American Constitution, which, more or less, was framed to keep him out; or rather, framed with such an intricate nicety of wisdom that the politicians can engineer it to keep him out.

To Americans, who love to venerate, their Constitution is as the Ark of the Covenant, on which hands should not be laid. That is natural and grateful, and you say it, whereupon you get the confidence: "Some day, of course, we may have to make changes, but not yet."

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It is like the Negro question ; it is consigned to the future ; but all the time the masses keep hammering at the door of that Covenant. Its walls are as strong, no doubt, as were those of Jerusalem, but public opinion in search of something can become a very wonder-working influence.

It is this influence which is causing America, in her heart's heart, to ask if all her governing institutions are for the best in a modern world ; not, may be, so much the Federal Constitution itself, as the under-world of use-and-wont, if you like of barnacles, which has grown around it. She has been governing the largest democracy in the world with eighteenth-century machinery, and she begins to feel the toil and imperfectness of the business.

When you put your ear to American politics on the spot, it is this cry, this rumble you hear. The curtain is rising on it, but the scene-shifters are so busy with each other's affairs that, in the babble, they almost drown the herald. Now and then they exchange a story, as, for instance, that Mr. W. J. Bryan, being asked if he would stand for the Presidency once more, replied, " I fancy not ; you see my ideas

POLITICS IN THE REPUBLIC

have already had two terms at the White House." Or his other saying, "The Republicans have adopted so many of my notions that I go to bed dreading lest I awake in the morning and find myself nominated for President by them." So; and the scene-shifters get to their familiar tasks again, trying to forget the "man in the street" who is knocking at their door of power.

Of old our novels were completed in three volumes, and surely America is awaiting her third volume. One told of her creation as an independent state, wherein, as before God, all men were born equal. But away round a dark corner slavery was tucked in, perhaps an inevitable thing, as circumstances were, but nevertheless a canker which had to be destroyed if America was to live and not be unduly insincere, as the Anglo-Saxon so often is in his political dealings with himself. The Civil War cut out the canker of slavery and gave America her soul and place in the world. Now she approaches her third supreme change, which is to make herself as honestly democratic, as plain-governing in her institutions, as her splendid people are in themselves.

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Think of a Constitution so wisely forged, so complete in every detail, that any meddling with it on the part of posterity is unnecessary. Somebody once said, not quite convincingly, that you cannot legislate for posterity. More certainly it is impossible to make a constitution for the centuries to come after, because conditions change with progress. New discoveries, like electricity, mean new systems of life altogether, and their results have to be grafted into the body social and politic.

Suppose you are a working-man engaged in some highly skilled, dangerous, modern calling, and you want a measure which will protect you from injury, or compensate you in the event of hurt. But you have a written Constitution which makes personal liberty so blessed, so inviolable, that the Act would, in the eyes of some court, interfere with that liberty. This lands you in a very ineffective situation, whether you be an individual, a community, or a nation. Probably most authorities would say that personal liberty is at least as sacred in England as it is in America, and we have added many a statute to our Magna Charta.

The American is half-apologetic when you

POLITICS IN THE REPUBLIC

force him against some one of his institutions which stands in the way of events, instead of being helpful to them. "Oh," he will say, "we'll get around that ; we'll get around it somehow." Probably he does, or probably he just leaves it to the politicians, a habit which has cost him dear.

Another attitude that has had a dragging effect, say, on social legislation in America, is the American's disregard for what other people have been doing. He and his forbears have lived in a world apart, separated by miles and miles of sea from the Old World of old problems. Out of the monarchic curse of the Old World arose the American Republic, at its birth the most advanced venture in States, although, indeed, its constitution was fashioned by a group of cautious British-blooded gentlemen.

With her natural wealth, developed by the most vigorous people history has known, America has gone forward on her unmatched career, and that has been thought enough. It has been interpreted as meaning everything, just as we used to fancy ourselves a people apart in quality and achievement. We had a very

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good conceit of ourselves, and dear Cousin Jonathan has had the same sort of satisfaction in himself. We had insularity, and America has had what may be described as "continental." We have sloughed our insular skin somewhat, and he is scratching his continental one ; in other words, he begins to think that the Old World, made new, as it largely has been, certainly in England, may do something towards rescuing his New World from becoming unresponsive in its governmental ways.

Once, perhaps, you might have seen from an American train the boast, "This is the largest cemetery in the state." Now the desire is to have the smallest death-rate in that state ; and yon strange, bloodless, parasitic creature, the professed American politician, is wondering what is happening, if his affairs are as sure as they once were, if there is not some element, ill-boding for him, stirring in the air. He can still, however, throb with patriotism and wrap himself in the Stars and Stripes, when he is only thinking of his office-holders and "graft." He has still many strings to his well-oiled bow, and he will play on as long as he can.

One of these has been the hesitancy, until

POLITICS IN THE REPUBLIC

comparatively recently, of the best men in America to take a hand in public life. Another is the want of a common impulse among the far-flung people of the country, a result inevitable when you recollect how many varied races the nation includes. "Give us our old Constitution," said an American to me, "while Europe continues to pour her tide of low-class citizens across our borders, and while the Negro is with us in appallingly growing numbers." There he voiced two notes often to be heard, with blessings on the fathers of the Republic for making so hard and fast a Constitution.

Necessarily, a huge country like America, which is still chiefly concerned with its material development, does not progress so quickly in social or labour legislation as we do in a compact little island where the people are all of one race, with the same outlook and ideals. You will find an interesting proof of this if you glance at an early edition of Mr. James Bryce's *American Commonwealth* and then at the new edition. The changes in the organisation of the Republic which he has had to record, have not been on a great scale. No; America, with her long-sustained pros-

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perity, a land where high money is made and spent, has been a law unto herself, but the wind on the hill which first chills and next braces, is about to blow in her direction.

It is hard to convince an American, unless he happens himself to know, as many do, that England to-day is much nearer being a real democracy than America. With us politics are always interesting, but in America, as newspaper men will tell you, they are only keenly followed when something particular is on hand. The American citizen scarcely thinks in politics, and so many others have been willing to do this for him that perhaps he may be forgiven. But the difference in the two countries can be accounted for in a way which brings their political systems into contrast, the Parliamentary System and the Federal System.

The essence of interesting news, in a newspaper man's estimate, is that it shall contain a surprise, a gamble. We constantly supply that in our politics, because late any night a Government may find itself in a minority, and that may involve a General Election. The American Constitution is so finely safeguarded against possibilities that this cannot happen. There is

POLITICS IN THE REPUBLIC

a long road between the voice of the people in America and the fulfilment of its high mandate. It is apt to get lost on the road, even to be forgotten by those who have cried it, and no wonder when one reflects on the political morass which it has to penetrate.

Between the will of the British people, expressed at a General Election, and the signature of the King, there is now no standing hindrance, but in America an expedition is needed every time to force the dense, tangled, undergrowth of trusts, "bossism," and spoilage. Hence goes up the shout in America, "We want things ordered in such wise that what we want shall be."

Perhaps it would be fair, as well as informing, to say that there is a certain analogy between the constitutional problem which is surely emerging in America, and the constitutional problem of the Lords which we have recently solved. Political prejudice aside, we had come to a stage where an hereditary, unrepresentative element, without limitation in its legislative powers, had ceased to be practical business in governing. For instance, the existence of an unqualified hereditary element made the

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closer Parliamentary grouping of the British Empire under a federal system impossible, and surely that is the dream of all good men. We, in substance, took the same course with the Lords that our forefathers took with the Crown; set clear bounds to its authority and left the picturesque form. America has also to consider whether she has not some "dead-wood" which must be cut away, dead-sea fruit to be removed.

She has a Constitution burdened with forms and laden with balances, so that at every stage a political highwayman—and America has a good many of them—can find an instrument for holding up the will of the people. "No road this way!" he boldly proclaims, and when that does not quite scare the American citizen, he threatens him with spring-guns and man-traps, finding them to hand in the niceties of the Constitution, as English landlords used to threaten Nature-loving poachers.

Somebody has wittily said of America as a state that she is a *Dreadnought* trying to sail with the top-hamper of an old three-decker. There is an endless range of mast and spar from which to fly the Stars and Stripes, and only

POLITICS IN THE REPUBLIC

one other flag is more welcome to the eye of a wandering Briton. There is even room, up among those lofty masts and spars, for a whole aviary of the American Eagle—a bird, by the way, which has become engagingly silent. But picturesque as it all is, this is not good business, and in his sensible mind the American knows that and is looking about for a sign.

It is coming, if it has not already arrived.

XIV. PLEASURES OF MEMORY

YOU will expect me, when I am leaving the Great Republic for the Great Dominion, to sum up my American impressions ; not that they are of any consequence in themselves, but because, being mine, they will interest you, who are——! No : you are not of the order of women who talk, talk, talk, and never by chance say anything.

Generalities about a country or a people only interest us in as far as they affect ourselves or somebody who comes into our lives. They have to touch us individually, if they are to mean more than the “hail and farewell” of a passing acquaintance, the wave of a man’s hand as he passes over a hill-top. This is a form of selfishness, but a noble selfishness which gives the world its place in the sun.

Well, I have liked America, and the Americans even more than their country, which is, I think, a comprehensible view. It is so big, so forceful, so raw a country that you leave it, as you entered it, with admiration rather than with affection. It keeps you constantly open-eyed, and indeed rejoices in being able to do this, and you are left marvelling.

PLEASURES OF MEMORY

“What do you say to this ?” your American friends ask when they take you somewhere, adding, “Have you anything like that ?” Probably not, and you are at a loss to answer being without the means of comparison. America, while often oddly conventional in the little things, is a land and a law unto itself, and must be estimated on that basis. In the desire to achieve, to utilise itself thoroughly, it is more strenuous than the Old World. But in the knowledge of how to live, what to do with the fruits of accomplishment, it strikes one as having much to learn.

See an American at work, and you have a man who “gets right there” as he would, himself, put it ; that is he wastes no time, no labour, on side details, but goes at once to the heart of the business. He plucks that heart out, examines it quickly, and rejects or accepts it on the spot. He is a fine type of the man of action who, within the range of that action, has the instant use of his full powers.

He knows that there are risks in all things, in fact he rather relishes them ; anyhow he is sure that if a risk is to be run it should be run deliberately, on a large scale, not half-and-half

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wise. There he resembles the younger English business man we are now producing, who climbs the ladder step by step, and is not afraid to leap for the crowning height when he finds that the ladder is some feet short.

True, he may miss his grasp, or the holding may part with him, in which case he tumbles to humble earth. But without the leap he cannot get to the very top, and he chances it, succeed or fail. There is a sweet little cherub up aloft somewhere, who looks after that man and he will probably not fall, although, again, he may.

Now a Scotsman would climb that ladder with a slower, surer step than the Englishman, but when he got to the top and saw the gap he would consider with himself, "Is it worth while ; here I am very well ; why risk more ?" Actually he does not reason thus, for nobody does in the big leaps of life. It is his temperament and instinct that come into action and he does their bidding.

If the Scotsman were by nature a harder gambler with life, and if he could master the easy charm which the best Englishman has, he would usually be in the first place, whereas he is apt to be found in the second, chief of the

PLEASURES OF MEMORY

staff. Give him a touch of Highland blood, however, and he will gamble with the Lowlander in himself, and then there is music for human dancing, with strange flings of success and failure. My point is that the American can sap and mine with the persistence of the Scotsman, and at the same time gamble for the highest turret with the Englishman. That gives him a forcefulness, even a blind courage which will probably "make good," allowing for ups and downs on the way.

You will have observed how the traffic of a street creeps to the side from the fast on-coming vehicle, not consciously but instinctively. It is the same in the human traffic of life; the cautious and the slow, who are the crowd, make way for the man at express speed, liking to look on the drama which will happen him. He may break his neck round the corner, and that is the go-by warning he gets, but if he does not he will probably find there the reward of the early bird. Do you know it is at corners that horses most frequently cast their shoes—good-luck corners!

Now the American in action, as I have tried to present him, is part and parcel of his country,

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effective, purposeful in whatever he does. It is a note, whether met in a country or in man, which you admire, but there is nothing specially loveable in it. Here, however, is where the other American comes in, the merry, genial, hospitable fellow who will do anything for you and speak abruptly while doing it. Brief words may go with kind hearts, and the American has both, though he can, on occasion, talk at greater length, and with less result, than any man in the world.

His fondness, say, for long after-dinner speeches, is curious in one who finds so little time for the exchange of small talk. He makes an art of those speeches, working them up as he does his stories, and that is better than our English indifference to after-dinner oratory, which mostly lands it in a morass of mere "remarks." We have our master speakers, however, who can hold their own in making the model oration, which should be serious enough to hold attention and humorous enough to fire a running crackle of laughter.

On the platform, as distinct from after-dinner speaking, we are surely ahead of America, anyhow simpler, more natural and, does it not

PLEASURES OF MEMORY

follow, more truly appealing ? Our rule is, have something to say and say it in your own way. America has the form in which the platform thing is to be said, and the key is pitched high. This makes for artificiality, even in Congress at Washington, where speeches are frequently read from manuscript or even from print ; and the whole consequence is that an American public speech is regarded more as a personal explosion than a deliverance. But it does not do to judge a people by their talk or speech-making, because then judgment might, in default, go against the silent ones. Is not silence golden ?

Never is the American more delightful than when he is an author, an artist, a journalist, a composer, a doctor, a lawyer, a professor, in a word when he is the professional man. As such he is not burdened with the hoary moss, called etiquette, which clings to his calling in an old country. He is the human man in his calling, applying it, not lost, submerged beneath it. He remains a clear-cut personality, one with scars on him and probably pleased to possess them.

The brain-worker is the choicest element of American life, and by that strange unwisdom

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into which nations let the selfish interests drag them, the burden of nationhood has, in these years, been falling most heavily on him. The strain of high living has been very pressing on his fixed income, which, in itself, is often poor as compared with the earnings of the American business man. He goes on courageously, faint sometimes but pursuing, the Sir Galahad of the American Republic, into whose veins his sacrifices may one day infuse a full tide of ideals.

Meanwhile he gathers into his order, into the professional class, a permanent expression of the characteristic qualities of the many races who produce the American people. It is his mission to give those qualities definite, cultured form, and you can see the achieving of this in his own features. They are the mirror in which you look for information about a people, the pool of destiny, and in him they have a regularity, a harmony of contour, a proportion which are missing from the multitude of American faces.

At any turn in the American crowd you meet a Saxon chin holding up a Jewish mouth, with a Slav nose looking out queerly beneath a

PLEASURES OF MEMORY

Teutonic forehead. It is the architecture of diverse races playing at hide-and-seek with each other. In the result the Greek god may appear rather battered; but if beauty, measured by artistic tests, be often scarce, expression never is. By contrast you get, in the American educated classes, harmony and regularity of features, combined with the alert American expression. It will be curious to watch how this highest, ripest type eventually evolves, and meanwhile it does one good to note that the Anglo-Saxon stamp asserts itself abidingly.

America has taken millions of population from all the white races of the globe, but, at her best, she still maintains the Anglo-Saxon hall-mark. "Saxon and Dane and Norman" they, but they are quickly made into American citizens on the surface, even if race differences grumble in the deeps and some day may explode. They all, whatever their blood, reach after the ideals spoken for long centuries by the English tongue, though you cannot, in one generation put that old wine into new bottles. Americans!—that is the word. "Yes," said an Irish cabman whose first "fare" in America

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was a " Britisher " visiting Bunker's Hill, overlooking Boston, " here's where we bate ye ! "

Strange is the adaptability of men to a new nationhood so vivid and vigorous as that of America ; stranger still the persistence of type amid that vividness and vigour. We settled New England with a resolute band of rather dry, direct, purposeful middle-class men and women, in whom was no undue romance, who flouted gaiety as an unholy thing—Roundheads in spirit. They were a douce, well-living, hard-thinking company, sterling quality in all the sober virtues. We settled Virginia with men in whom romance and gaiety were a draft of life, who preferred, when they could get it, joy to sorrow, who loved colour, not severity—Cavaliers in spirit.

The American who knows his native land will tell you that these strains will persist where they were planted, and you can yourself observe it. He will tell you, further, that they are, perhaps, the upper and nether millstones between which American character is being formed. Finally he may whisper in confidence that therefore all is well for the future of the Commonwealth.

When a woman meets a man for the first

PLEASURES OF MEMORY

time, she wonders what he is thinking of her, She has instantly made up her mind whether he is a man with whom she could have any traffic beyond passing the time of day, because that is a first sex instinct. You ask about a stranger nation, not what it thinks of you, for it has no such thought at all, but whether you could belong to it and remain yourself.

On that America is quick and clear ; it has natural room for you, whoever you may be, a place for you which may carry you high, a welcome and a hand-grip, if you will but be true to yourself. Next to being British, the average Briton would wish, no doubt, to be American, but he would not find so much comfort of life in New America as he does in Old England, at all events until he had changed his ideas on that matter. Habit is much but not everything.

America is a wonderful workshop, a magnificent arena for any man's talent, especially for him who would be king in money and the power of money, but give me England for the quiet life ; and Americans know it. That is why they come here, to listen to the long, easy rumble of London, to sit on the edge of an English shire and look at the clouds flirting with a stream.

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

What you see in that familiar English landscape seems to be yours, to come into your heart, to be so much of you, and America does not offer you the same illusion of possession. She does not give you the lad and lass wandering in a lane with cowslips for a carpet, or if she does, you somehow miss meeting them. "It's America for money-making," said an observant American woman, "and England for love-making, and," she added with an arch glance, "give me both."

It is characteristic of American adaptability that she has enlisted the new-fangled motor-car in the good service of love-making. The American young man with a motor-car takes his best girl riding in it, and she likes the experience. No wonder, for the evenings of the late summer in America are joyous, with freshness in every air that blows. Nature, too, has turned her earlier green into a soft brown, so heralding the winter of settling down by the fireside. There Nature is hinting subtly to the god and goddess in the car, and thus are matches made.

A big motor-car—and young American couples like them roomy in case of a tiff!—

PLEASURES OF MEMORY

makes a famous flirting machine. Mothers, who are simple beings when they want daughters married, tolerate them because they seem safer than they sometimes are. A side-slip, a mere skid may tilt a car, if it be going fast, off the high road on to the other road of no-return. Or a tyre may collapse and there is not a spare one to bring the lovers home, and they must hie them to the nearest inn, as if they were a couple eloping in Europe a century ago, and their coach had been held up by robbers. They play love to the tune and movement of the "Turkey Trot," to "rag-time," instead of to the melody and rhythm of a minuet, and that is all the difference.

America, you perceive, is not indifferent to the lessons of romance, but she applies them in her own manner, and the new automobile is popular. But how a proposal can be heard, however nearly it may be whispered, amid the roar of this modern chariot, one finds it difficult to understand. Only proposals of marriage are hardly ever made; they just happen.

At that stage the American motor miss may be relied upon to keep the other likely girls out

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

of one particular car, unless she herself is riding on the front seat beside the driver. She knows then that he is safe, and he knows it, but he has had a right "good time" and is content to turn Benedick.

Here's to the little God in the Car, as he rides far and fast in America, a land of great friendliness to the stranger who, "though seas divide us," will not forget—will never forget.

XV. THE NIAGARA OF THINGS

NIAGARA is one of the original store-houses of Nature, a manifestation still, though man has tampered with it, of the primæval forces.

You see it leaping virgin-like from the breast of Mother Earth, and returning thither again. It cries new power, force, tempest, the untamable wildness of Nature and, with these, grandeur. It lodges the spirit of place securely in the twentieth century, and of how many things can that be said ?

My first impression of it was got by sound, for I came to it in the dark, when the night was late and there was no star in the skerry. On the American shore I heard a long, pained rumble as of growling thunder. The tone deepened as we drew down the road towards the bridge crossing from America to Canada.

Then we were on the bridge, going at a walk, and the roar seemed to rise from below instead of coming, as it had done before, evenly to the ear. It had also gained in tumult, so that now I knew it was the roar of great waters. They have, if you will listen to them anywhere, three distinct stages in their massive music. They

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fall away a solid trump, they break into a hundred tunes as they fall, and again they come together for a "last post."

While we crossed that bridge from America to Canada, I listened to this music in those three keys, played by Nature's grandest orchestra. Hardly a half-tone of it changed and that gave it a strange surge of the inevitable, of fatefulness. You felt that you were in the presence of the veritable God of Nature, that forces of infinite possibilities were all about you. It made you very small to yourself, this majesty of universe of which you could see nothing ; for darkness accentuates the uncanny.

Up from the depths which we were crossing there ascended a steady cloud of spray, also unseen, but felt, as it descended again in a wet shower. Somehow that rain from Niagara seemed to soften its attitude towards you, to make its noise softer, its hidden personality more human.

Most of us have friends whom we have come to think hard, unemotional, because they have always held themselves back. One day they are taken by surprise with a sorrow or a gladness and they burst into tears. That brings them

THE NIAGARA OF THINGS

and us near to each other, lets forth the one touch of simple nature which links us all, and we understand better.

The influence of those tears of mist from Niagara were like that ; they softened the noises of its roar, blent them into a tune which came in at one's open window that night, a not ungrateful lullaby. With it there also drifted in light wisps of the spray, which sent my fancy roving and dancing to a remark you once made. You said you found it difficult to cry, and that you pitied women who were like you, because you were sure they suffered.

“ Yes,” said I, trying to guide you from the mood, “ but at least they keep their cheeks pretty and their eyes from being swollen and red. What could be sadder than a woman's face after she has been crying ? ”

“ True,” you answered, “ she may look stupid, but, believe me, she feels much better. A baby is never so happy as when it has had a good cry, and enough of the baby remains in every woman to make her much the same. You men make a fatal mistake by imagining a woman to be excessively complex. You map her all out,

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as if she were the machinery of a watch. You set up a most ingenious theory about her degrees of complexity and you proceed to court, marry and live with her on that basis. You find that nothing you had expected happens, which might suggest to you that you were on the wrong track. But no; men being men, you merely say that women are incomprehensible. Really the key to them is simplicity, the primal feelings, and if you can touch those you conquer and they are—in tears.”

“Well, then,” I said, feeling I was losing that argument, “why is it that some women find it, as you say, difficult to cry—to cry and be happy ever afterwards?”

“May be,” you answered, “because they have not found themselves altogether, because there just remains one little mystery in the heart, because something keeps them back from the joyful relief of tears. It is natural a woman should cry; it clears her emotions of disturbing humours; as natural as that Niagara should drain away the melting snows of a Canadian winter.”

So you ended, I remember, and it was the

THE NIAGARA OF THINGS

form of the end, your allusion to Niagara, which brought the talk back into my mind, as I lay listening to its music and wondering how much more of that music the morning would reveal. Nothing is complete at dead of night ; you cannot even smoke for long in the darkness, nor carry on a conversation. We need the light ; we must have the sun to warm the world before we go out into it. If I had lived in pre-historic days I should have been a sun-worshipper, certainly if I had seen it shining upon Niagara Falls.

Sit down in spirit beside me, let us look them in the face for a whole day, and yet another day, and see what we make of the manifestation, whether it has any concern for us, because that, after all, is the ultimate interest—the individual bearing of things.

The book of expectation, as you will have experienced, is one in which many mistakes appear, when it comes into collision with the book of actuality, by some called the Book of Fate. You have long been familiar with Niagara by reading and hearing about it. On that information, and remember that no two people see alike, you construct a picture.

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

It goes down like a pack of cards when you come eye to eye with the spot, not so much because you were wrong with the second-hand knowledge you had gathered, as because you had built the edifice wrongly. You found that your plans and specifications were not those on which Nature had worked, that you had missed the grand simplicity on which she moves her wonders to perform. You had constructed very cleverly, but then cleverness is frequent while natural greatness is rare.

These are your first reflections as you actually look upon Niagara from the Canadian side where the view is most striking, because there you confront both falls. That next America is highest by a few feet and even looks wider, though you must not insult Niagara by speaking in measurements. It is backed by a cloud of green trees which scatter themselves across the island that divides Niagara, so providing two falls. Everywhere, too, the eye catches a grateful glimpse of an under-carpet of green grass, such as Ireland has. The uprising dew of Niagara makes and keeps that verdure, an iced shower-bath for which trees and grass are grateful in the hot summer.

THE NIAGARA OF THINGS

This clothing of green is present on the Canadian bank, with a difference which you desire, since the two sides of a face are never similar. They may seem so, but, if you love a face, you know better ; you know that the two only become one in the person, that there is something in each which it needs the other to bring out. The poets are to blame for errors of this sort, because they deal in generality rather than in detail, finding it easier to rhyme. But they could make no mistake about the falls of Niagara, which are entirely different.

That of Canada is curved into a horse-shoe and hence is called the Horse-Shoe Fall. You do not receive the impression of a half circle as quickly as that of a straight line, and you must slowly follow round that horse-shoe before it leaves its full effect on your mind. You are well rewarded for your necessary pains, in the mingled shock of power and beauty which you get. It resembles a great light ; you can only look upon it quickly and pass from its flame.

But by now you have mastered the geography of Niagara, its contour, the cut which Nature gave it, and you are prepared to regard it on

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

Nature's plan, not your own preconceived idea of what it was. This enables you to clear off the other mistake you had, namely that Niagara is just a heavy sheet of water falling over two spaces of high rocks.

It is that assuredly, but it is more, for Niagara is a river and the falls are part of that river ; a giant river linking two of the fresh-water lakes of Canada and then going on to make the St. Lawrence. When you reflect, you could not have the falls without the river. You must therefore take it into the picture, which, in your imaginings, you had not done at all. But walk through a pleasaunce of green tree, flowering shrub and emerald-grass, to the corner where Niagara drops over the Canadian fall, and from there look up-stream.

You behold a miracle of water forces, and it is ribbed in by the far-separated, low-lying American and Canadian shores. Down upon you comes a broad ribbon of tumult and foam, lashed out of all pattern by the thousand sentinel rocks which try to restrain it. They shoot up their heads which the waters have worn conical, an old man's bald skull often repeated. You might get some notion of the

THE NIAGARA OF THINGS

forlorn figures they present, if you could fancy the stones of Salisbury Plain multiplied endlessly in number and flung into a cauldron wide, deep and angry.

Those stones, or others for them, have been fighting their battle with the pouring waters ever since time was, and the Red Man sat smoking stoically beside them, putting up his prayer to the god of water power. They look very solitary, very desolate, very weary, exactly as a human being would who was drowning all the time and yet would not, could not drown.

In some the thought of death is no more than the opening of new pages of life, fuller of wonderment possibly than any they have encountered. In most, however, for the less choice spirits are the majority, it is a dread, a horror, a passing into the black unknown, the cold never-never land. But it must be still more dreadful to want to die and have death refused, to court destruction and have it go by, as Niagara passes those milestones of time which bestrew her waters during her race for the falls.

The mind sensitive of eternity will not pass a milestone on a roadside without a grave

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

thought, and even the telegraph posts, streaming beside an express train, convey the inevitableness of time. But they are as pin-points on the life-book which we all keep, even if we do not all keep it fully, compared with the graveyard of rocks which tries to lure back Niagara from suicide and only sends her the quicker to death.

It is a mad race, made the madder by the soft azure of a far summer sky against which it is set ; a fury coming out of a frame of peace and sunshine, of gossamer cloud and the blue of true love. “ Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned ! ” wrote Byron in his wrath, and like a greater man of the Bible, who also spake in his wrath, he was wrong. Byron swam the Hellespont but he never saw Niagara, a monster mouth of waters, ever churning through its worn, useless teeth. What must it be up-river there, in the winter, when this fury is ironclad with ice ? Uncanny, indeed !

You perceive a devilry in fresh water much moved, which is absent from the salt ocean, however deeply it may be stirred. There is method in the madness of the sea, for the settled tides and currents keep it reasonably in

THE NIAGARA OF THINGS

hand. It can be counted upon to obey its natural controlling forces. But with fresh water, as the sailor men of the great American and Canadian lakes will tell you, there is no reason, only madness. Thus it is that a lake storm may be more deadly to man and ship than an ocean storm, because its behaviour cannot be anticipated, provided for. Being of the land you associate fresh water with peace, but, like men of peace, it is awful when it breaks out. Have a blow on the inland sea of Erie, and it sends so many extra feet of water choking down Niagara River to leap into space at your elbow.

We have a way of appealing to our childhood days, the wonder days, when, grown older, we are confronted with marvels. Perhaps it is our only hope of understanding them, that is by faith, rather than through the eye. Niagara is my very near neighbour, but my mind shoots oversea to a Scottish stream where there is a hangman's leap.

A man, so the tradition tells, was running for his life, with the hangman behind him. The one safely leapt the stream, twenty feet from rock to rock, with a whistling torrent below.

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

He turned in hope, only to find the other above him and he cast for the rope at a time which hung good men on little provocation. Strange, is it not, by the side of Niagara, to be reconstructing the hangman's leap of long ago, but that is the life of the memory, sometimes happy, welcome, sometimes unhappy, unwelcome.

Propinquity, an ancient dealer in wisdoms declared, is the secret of love, but mere nearness on the part of the human being means no intimacy with Niagara. When a girl flicks specks from the jacket of her sweetheart, you may be sure that their courtship has reached a decisive stage. The act is the harbinger of possession, the first sign also of being possessed, except in the case of a widow and then it should be a danger signal. A girl wants her sweetheart, her other half, to be speckless, but the larger feeling behind her act is probably a sealed book to her, while a widow of experience knows, and is all the better for it. Assuredly you cannot, be ye maid or widow, flick specks from Niagara. You range your acquaintance with the human side of Nature, and you can hardly find an opening for a contrast, not to say a comparison.

THE NIAGARA OF THINGS

What is a comforting sight? To see a comely woman drawing the window-curtains of her home, against the evening arrival of her husband. She looks forth on a winter night to discover if he is in sight; she looks a second time and the lights and shadows of a warm fire catch her hair; she looks a third time and then, perfectly satisfied that he will come, she pulls the curtains close and you envy his return.

Or again it is a winsome sight to see a girl who is on the brink of womanhood, trying to put her hair up for the first time. She is doing it secretly, with the blind of her room undrawn, and a candle set in front of a mirror! Her hands dance in and out in the dim light, and now she is pleased with herself and again she is not. She is the woman emerging from girlhood and she scarce knows how to do it. She would not be seen by the world for all the world, but there is not enough of the woman in her yet to shut the world out. Therefore it has a sight to gladden it, and if no artist has painted that sight let him set to work, for it represents one of the ages of women. Men have seven, women seventy.

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

Clearly Niagara has majesty but not tenderness, nothing inviting you to it, caressing, soft, tuneful to the touch. How could it? Some seven feet of solid water pours steadily over the horse-shoe worn in the Canadian rock. For a short distance above, it appears to stop its writhings, its mad struggles, as if it knew there was no further use of resistance to the coming leap. It takes on an even, oily surface, the result of growing speed and the absence of obstacles. It goes over solid, green, with scattered ribbons of foam which the wind has made. There is a fierce continuous groan from those waters, as they leave their high place for the abyss below. This sound gathers volume as the flood carries it down, and when it reaches bottom it shoots up again with a kind of explosive wail.

The home of that wail is a cauldron of boiling river half hidden in reeling spray, but you cannot look down on it from close quarters. You have to walk away somewhat to get a full view of the green wave, ice-cold as death, throwing itself unconcernedly over the cliff, without stop or swerve. In a long shroud it links top and bottom, the image of death

THE NIAGARA OF THINGS

again, and that shroud, when it has consigned its contents to the stricken sea beneath, lifts into clouds of rain.

But the mightiness of the waters, as they come down at Niagara, are whirling away in a thousand tides to the rapids which drain them into Lake Ontario. A small steamer will be noticed skimming over the surface of that unfathomed storm, and its frailty strikes you as a true object lesson of man's relationship to this wonder of the earth. Even so, he has strewn its banks with power-houses, made them ugly with factory chimneys, but he cannot take away its sense of sheer force. He uses it to light towns and cities and harnesses it for traction, but to the end he can never tame it, because its spirit is untamable.

That is why it is surprising that people, tired of living, give themselves to it. Death usually comes flying a flag of peace, but Niagara proclaims death by war, and never gives up her dead. Are the souls she has taken by violence, and those which have flung themselves to her, all imprisoned in that dark gulf called the whirlpool? Are they down so deep that they are in untroubled waters, or are the

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

cries which you cannot hear for the roaring torrent, those lost ones calling for release? Nay, out of the whirlpool, down the swirling rapids, goes everything with buoyancy, and the rest is beyond our ken.

There is an instant when Niagara looks soft, when its dropping shroud almost suggests the white dress of a bride, and that is when the day and night meet with the sun blessing both. This comes swiftly at Niagara, for the American continent, there anyhow, has not our twilight and you must watch attentively.

The two falls are having a fancy-dress ball and the dancers wear all the colours of the rainbow. They leap and caper to their orchestra, which has become a rich melody. Then the cap of night falls and you hear a voice saying "Home! Let us go home." And you also say Let us leave these—

"Odd, antic shapes of wild unheard-of things."

XVI. A LAND OF NEW RENOWN

WHEN we take a honeymoon together, — an unbachelor honeymoon! — we might, I suggest, do worse than come to Canada. It is a land flowing with the milk and honey of Nature, and thus a place for the true honeymoon.

Has it ever occurred to you that most people set about honeymooning in quite the wrong way? It is the great discovery as between a man and a woman who have taken each other, in good or ill, for all time. Therefore it should be a period of quiet wonderment, of getting to understand, of real communion, of the blending of two lives into one. Much depends upon making a good start, because the freshly written marriage contract is a tender, sensitive human document. It takes marks and keeps them which later it would refuse as of no consequence.

Now, instead of finding the right spirit of place for this, newly married people oftenest run away on a sort of wild romp, lovers unleashed. You would think they were afraid of each other and wanted to be lost in a whirl of space and strangers. They take no thought for

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

the morrow, though the embraces and impressions of to-day are making the to-morrows of their married life. They seek diversion in sight-seeing, they traverse some slice of the world instead of using it as a frame in which to see themselves.

They make the true discovery of each other difficult, whereas that should be easy, being a natural stage in the relationship of men and women, because in those conditions they are not the selves they are going to be. They create mirages, instead of leaving the beauty of mutual love to unveil itself in the simple manner that a child goes to sleep. They want faith, which is the magic of all things, and they miss the perfectness which goes with it. If a thing is worth doing, it is worth doing well, and that saying concerns a honeymoon, which should have the art of Nature draped in the poetry of the soul.

Some clever woman should establish a school for teaching the true catechism of the honeymoon to bridal couples, if it could be done, and she might well send them to the restfulness of Canada. "But," you say, "what of the sea? It is no bridal road, and a ship,

A LAND OF NEW RENOWN

with all its luxuries, is no fairy palace for newly married folk. Nay," you add, "one might be sick, and to be love-sick and sea-sick at the same time would be a poor business." There, with a woman's insight and a woman's logic, you instantly find the right answer, and that is probably why a sea voyage is rarely chosen for a honeymoon. But even so, keep Canada in your mind, if only because by doing so you will be the more interested in my general impressions of it.

Canada seems, as one journeys through it, a land of great lakes, of full rivers, of green distances, in fine, a land with the spirit of "fresh woods and pastures new." The eye lingers fondly on all this greenness. It is comforting after the arid harshness of much of America, though, to be sure, the two countries blend in a setting of Nature where you cannot distinguish the border-line. Yes, to me Canada is a holiday, a honeymoon land, because the sun shines in it and there are big empty spaces to which you may let your thoughts go out, and from which you can bring them back without disturbance.

"O Canada!" choruses one of its anthems;

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

Canada of sun or snow. Her virginity of Nature, if the image be allowed, is unspoiled as yet by the ingenious artifices of man, except here and there. She wears a beautiful cloak of flower and foliage in the summer, of the brown of the maple leaf in the autumn, and of a white coverlet, dexterously woven as mere man cannot weave, in the winter when the snow falls and lies deep for months. It lies like a bridal cloak on the land until the spring returns, and the sun is hot, and its heat and that of Mother Earth link up their beneficent circuit once more. Then it disappears like a fairy scene in a titanic pantomime, as melting waters everywhere, pouring into river and lake and finally into the Atlantic. In the white edgings of its salt waves you see, in a new form, the crisp snow which adorned the Canadian landscape, for Nature wastes not, neither does she want.

If you are a Nature lover, and especially if you love solitude, you will find your heart's desire in Canada. You can go almost anywhere and get scenery and peace, and what does the worn heart of man, or the troubled heart of woman, want more than those gifts of Providence! Next to hope, which is not

A LAND OF NEW RENOWN

an abiding guest with everybody, they are the great comforters of this world. Canada has not, perhaps, thought much about that yet, so busy has she been developing herself as a country. She has been taking in the prairie, sowing and reaping golden wheat for the hungry peoples of the globe, laying down railways, doing what has to be done in a young country. Consequently she has not begun to contemplate her own beauties in the mirror of Nature, although she is aware of them, as a girl is of her personal charms, whenever she catches her face reflected in a window.

The dominant note of Canadian life, as it has struck me, is that of the out-of-doors, the open road, the breasting hill and the crack of a wholesome wind in pine trees. She toils in town and in country, but plays resolutely in the open air. She gives herself to herself under the blue skies of summer and the frosty firmament on high of the winter months. You find this even in a city like Toronto, prosperous, square-built to confront any chance, which has parts as open as the country for playing fields to her citizens. And she has her Lake Ontario, where white and red-winged

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

yachts flit all through the summer, until the winter arrives with its ice sports. You find the outdoor life, in older, more historic Montreal, above which rises Mount Royal, with a view from its top hard to match anywhere. You find it in Ottawa, the elegant capital of the Great Dominion, set upon the swinging river of the same name.

Anywhere around Ottawa you may read the call of the wild in the footsteps, still easily traceable, of the Red Man, and in those, deeper still, of the pioneer French-Canadians. Wander to the Rideau River, look at its falls, so like a curtain, and resurrect the long dead French-Canadian who thought as much, and named those waters.

In fine, there is hardly a place in Canada, as far as I have seen, wherein you may not walk hand in hand with Nature, both of you happy. It is fine to be in such a country, fine to be a citizen of such a country, and, if somebody asked me where life could be beautifully spent, I would say "Try Canada!" It has an endless stretch of God's turf for a carpet, and by-and-by when it gets older, traditions will grow up, fairies will begin to dance among

A LAND OF NEW RENOWN

the trees, and Canada will not only be a beautiful land but rich in story.

It is already a comfortable enough land to live in, for it does not beat the drum of strenuous life as hard as its neighbour does. It has some of the alertness, the rapidity of the Great Republic but it cushions them. It has preserved Nature's boon, the repose which makes life best worth living. You can get out of a Canadian train, stretch your legs, look at the river running by, and say good morning to the sun up in the sky. You can do that somewhere in most countries, but in Canada, a place of vigour, of progress unbounding, yet not a place of "hustle," you can do it anywhere. You may sleep and care not, awaken and leisurely look out on the new day, speculating what it is going to be, what it is going to bring to you. What is living without its dreams and visions, and those that may not be realised are often the dearest to memory, as women always hold the prodigal son dearest.

You will find yourself in some historic corner, say Quebec, which sits high above the lordly St. Lawrence River and is full of the romance of French-Canada. You look around you on

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

ancient battlefields, either green with grass and studded with cows, or, in the winter, white with snow. But they recall the chivalry of Montcalm and the valour of Wolfe, the battle shock, on Canadian soil, of the two first races of Europe. These ancient fields of romance display their stories before you as, very contentedly, you contemplate their restfulness to-day, the present lying above the past, each embracing the other. The present and the past ; that, surely, is the meeting of two elements which give national life its topmost interest.

Walk from Quebec into the country, as far as the ruins of the Château Bigot, where there was revelry by night when France ruled Canada. You may, if you have the ear of vision, hear again the soft whispers that filled it, the sweet nothings which handsome men said to bright women. You may, if you have the seeing eye, enjoy again the faces of those women, that of Angélique des Meloises, the fairest among them ; women of the time of Louis XIV, who by their cajolery made French-Canada a diverting land, and helped to lose it for the Fleur-de-Lis. Yes, their pretty hands

A LAND OF NEW RENOWN

had to do with the lowering of that silken banner; it fell torn by the violence of their passions, bruised by their kisses.

You have the romance of two worlds in this atmosphere, and the two mingle without awkwardness in Canada. You meet a people who are eminently modern, who are practical to their finger-tips in politics, business, and the other spheres of achievement, and who yet have a real bond with the past ages. The American is a national type, a man, or a woman, complete, clean-cut, all there, somebody in particular, while the Canadian is, in effect, a branch of the Old World peoples. He keeps the Old World characteristics of leisure, of willingness to gossip for gossip's sake, of having time, amid the making of a living or a fortune, to see if your coat fits, and ask who is your tailor. He may himself wear clothes of the American cut, read a deal of American literature, and be, in the life of action, a comrade on the same trail as the American. But always, you fancy, there is a reservation, a touch in the Canadian which is nearer to Europe than to America. Perhaps it could be expressed by saying that the American is a grown product of the New

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

World, while the Canadian, one of the British household, has not yet arrived at his final self.

It is a test of this that Canadian women do not dress as smartly as their American cousins, because that characteristic comes after other things. They dress well, using good, even expensive, materials, but often the last fine touch, the right gathering of a costume about its wearer, is absent, when it might easily be present. Canada has lots of well-dressed women ; a saunter in Toronto, in Quebec, most of all maybe in Montreal, will satisfy you about that ; but style and the woman are not so general as across the border. When Canada was French the petticoat of elaborate beauty was a vital affair in dress, while with modern fashions it is not, for one reason because room enough is not left it. But among French-Canadian women, in particular, the petticoat continues to reign, and be shown around the feet, and the effect is not always happy. You cannot tuck a Louis IX petticoat, or a far souvenir of it, into a hobble skirt and hope to seem well dressed. Still, what right has anybody to say such things when Canada's women, English or French, are veritably a dower of virtues

A LAND OF NEW RENOWN

and qualities to their homeland. They give it comeliness, virtue, happiness, and by-and-by they will be getting on that frock as elegantly as the American woman.

The Canadian himself is not so demonstrative as the American except, perhaps, in the conduct of his politics, which have other American characteristics. Nor does he constantly tell funny stories, although, unfortunately, he has caught the bad habit of making long speeches. A township will have few recreations of an evening, after work is over, and this applies doubly to the long winter nights; therefore if there be dinner or a gathering on hand there is a great margin of time for speech-making, which often is good and humorsome. The Canadian can likewise be silent, though his electric atmosphere begets talk, for broadly, at his foundations, he is just an Englander, a Briton, as often as not a Scotsman, with an overlay of Americanism arising from his nearness to it. He says "Sure" like the American, and possibly that word well expresses the confidence which, like the American also, he feels in himself.

He is manfully confident, as he has reason to

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

be, for, as the architect of his own fortunes, he has prospered beyond dreaming. Moreover the up-building of a new nation, where men and women can live in ease and comfort, is the noblest of all tasks, a veritable mission from the heavens. But there may be things which we, on our ancient side of the world, could teach the Canadian, and which he will be glad to learn. He will not always be content to build great cities, drive wonderful railways, harness to his uses the Dominion which Providence has given him. He will think of his other self and create the superman of intellect and heart, who, in turn, will bring along a Canadian art, certainly a Canadian literature, for it is well begun. That seed has been sown, and is already springing up, but meanwhile the crop is overshadowed by the industrial progress of Canada. Only when this has been perfected shall we see how strongly her spirituality has grown within her body.

She will be all ready when she steps into the ranks of the elder statesmanship of the world, and that may come quickly to her. The Canadian is determined to think himself and his destiny out, in the slow way which has been

A LAND OF NEW RENOWN

characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon race. Thoughts so born take time to gather form and a still longer time to be applied, but once let them be fairly launched into the world and they go on earning harvest after harvest. Canadians have heard this higher call already, they are listening to it, and they will not forget it amid their labours of getting rich.

They are a busy people and they work hard and quickly while they work. But they know that all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy and they do not intend, if they can help it, to be a dull nation. Their faces are seared with the furrows of sweat, from turning over the soil and the dollar, but a spring of laughter lurks in those furrows and it will be tapped. They should find sparkle for the mind in their constant communion with Nature, and mirth and wit in the gurgle and splash of their many rivers. They cannot get away from those things which are all about them, and they will draw them into their nature, and send them forth again richer by an hundred-fold. Beautiful and bright is the domestic home life of Canada, an assuring herald against all the perils that beset a nation, and when she is a little

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

older it will take a quiet elegance of its own. You do not have rich charm and abundant spirituality in a people until, like wine, they are of age. With the Canadian people, the flavour should be choice because they have great cellars of Nature from which to draw inspiration.

You will, I am afraid, think I am talking a poem of generalities about Canada, and that is possibly near the truth, except, indeed, in the matter of the poem. One likes Canada so well as a holiday land that one does not take trouble to search into its material deeps, for no doubt they are there. It will have its political tangles, its social problems, its over-leaf pages, its back-door, like every other country which is clamorous and driving forward, or silent and standing still, but for these I have not looked. It has been enough to wander along its generous ways, to meet its warm-hearted, simple folk, to have as much fishing or shooting as you like. What more can any man desire ?

One thing ; the companionship of somebody who is very nearly attuned to himself. That companionship completes the pleasure of being with wild Nature, lifts it to the highest heights,

A LAND OF NEW RENOWN

gives it a name and a human habitation. This gleam of the undying in man and woman has still to go out and possess the generous Dominion of Canada. With it she will be splendidly rich among the nations of the earth.

XVII. "PIERRE AND HIS PEOPLE"

WHAT can I tell you about the French-Canadians who, in simple truth, are an Old World people of a New World? It is fully three centuries since Jacques Cartier sailed up the great, mysterious St. Lawrence. The French-Canadian, however, still remains a picturesque link with that romantic time, as we shall see.

He has not the initiative, the energy, the vigour of the Briton, who is already the chief driving force of Canada. He is content to go on rather in the old way of simplicity, salt, and sincerity, "contented wi' little and cantie wi' mair," as Burns says. He is fond of music and of art, and the statues of Champlain and Laval which he has erected in Quebec—French-Canadian handiwork—suggest that some day he may be the artist of the American continent. He is thinking a good deal of the past, to which tradition and his Church anchor him, while the Briton is thinking of the future, and of the splendour and wealth that await a Canada fully peopled and developed.

Broadly put, the Roman Catholic Church in Canada strikes one as saying to itself,

“PIERRE AND HIS PEOPLE ”

“Progress, hardly ! But don’t let us lag too far behind—not too much brake !” Bluntly translated, this means that it does not want the French-Canadians to adopt a rate of progress which would lessen its power with them.

The influence of the *curé*, so far as his training and his light carry him, is faithfully exercised for the highest good of his flock. But the lesson does not end there. Suppose he is the *curé* of a rural parish and that he himself has been drawn from the lower classes, as is frequently the case in Canada. He gets on well with his people, he suits them, he understands them, but his leadership—because in effect he is captain of the parish—does not imply social headway.

Still, even among the Habitants, the country folk, of French Canada there are signals and signs of progress. They will to-day say to the *curé*, very daringly, “Don’t you trouble about drains and such like ; they are not your business.” Let the *curé* remain supreme in things spiritual, but in things worldly the Habitant thinks of taking a hand, though as yet no great hand.

If a French-Canadian goes to America, which often happens, he returns a reformer, a man

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

with opinions which he does not hesitate to express. He has learned that affairs and ways in French Canada are not so far forward as they might be. He says that and acts on the saying, all of which indicates another small impetus to the liberal movement among French-Canadians.

Unfortunately, from the point of view of progress and the coming closer together of the two Canadian peoples, there are few marriages between them. Such marriages are frowned upon by the Roman Church, and there, perhaps, one can see the unmaking of many a love idyll almost before it has begun. The non-French peoples which Canada is drawing to herself will intermarry and create a type as in America, but at present there is no path open to an Anglo-French race. It seems regrettable, does it not ?

The French-Canadian is proud of his language, his laws, his religion. All three abide with him in work and in play ; they are the Magna Charta of his national being in Canada, the only sure road through which he can be approached. Perhaps it is a difficult road to negotiate for the hearty, impulsive, practical

“PIERRE AND HIS PEOPLE”

Briton, who, in unchanged Old World ways, sees mere unprogressiveness. It is also a road worth trying to negotiate.

Scotsmen and Englishmen, Irishmen and Welshmen, have gone up and possessed industrial Canada, even the larger industries of the French Province of Quebec. But have they nothing to learn from the French-Canadians? Surely they have.

Is that latent artistic sense, inherited from the France of the great days of Louis Quatorze, not something? It stands for the natural incentive to sculpture and painting, perhaps for style and expression in the Canadian literature of the future. Are the ideals which French Canada nurtures from Old France—bashful about them as yet, almost hiding them away—not something greatly to value? Are the charm and grace of the French-Canadian women not qualities which will one day help to make Canada joyous as well as prosperous?

A chief danger with a new country is that it may grow up without a soul, that it may run so steadily in pursuit of money as to neglect the birth of a soul. Some folk say that this is true, in part anyhow, of America, that it is a blemish

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

on that wonderful nation, and there are Americans who agree with the criticism. Is Canada to take a similar risk, when, by drawing upon the natural endowments of its French people at their best, it might enlarge its national soul indefinitely ?

“ But how,” exclaims your Canadian Briton, “ can we do anything of this sort ? Our French compatriots practically leave us alone. And besides the difference in temperament, there is that wall of religion which divides us.” “ Ah,” replies the French-Canadian, “ but you won’t take the trouble to understand us, and we suspect that you rather despise us. You won’t learn our language ; not very many of you do, and you find it hard to sympathise with our points of view.” Still, social intercourse between the British and the French in Canada is on the increase, agreeably and pleasantly on the increase.

Not long ago a French nobleman was on a visit to Canada, and, hearing of his presence, one of the first officials of the Dominion invited him to dinner. “ Yes,” came the reply, “ I should gladly accept the invitation, but unhappily it falls on the date of the anniversary

“PIERRE AND HIS PEOPLE ”

of a battle in which the British beat the French in Canada. If I attend your dinner, my Canadian countrymen will probably be displeased with me.”

It was explained to the timid French nobleman that his prospective host had never thought of the anniversary, never remembered it; whereupon, said the Frenchman, “You are an amazing people, you British; you do not remember a victory! We French could not forget one—much less a defeat.”

Probably the French-Canadians are tenacious of the past of Canada because so much of it is their own, but that incident was not typical of the newer social spirit which is abroad in Canada. At least there are welcome signs of a broader spirit, if more cannot be said than that—it is sprouting and it can be cultivated.

To be quite frank, the French, generally speaking, are not so well off as the British. They cannot give such good dinners and they hate to give dinners less good; and moreover they know, what others may learn, that to sit down to a feast is not necessarily to dine happily. It appears a very small matter this,

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but it is the kind of matter which counts, only it will not, observers hope, always count.

Socially French-Canadians of the upper classes have been unduly inclined to remain "in their shells," as one might express it. They are gradually, however, being drawn forth, in particular by their young girls and young men, who are learning not merely the English tongue, but British ways, and who, it may be, stand for the realisation of the newer, freer spirit.

There is music in the soul of the well-born French-Canadian girl, and she will pass it on. She has wit and she understands by intuition, just as she charms without effort. Her convent education, whatever else may be said of it, teaches her reverence, the value of faith and the ideals. She will make up for its limitations when she comes into quicker touch with the world of everyday life. May she do so without losing either her reverence or her ideals, which, mind you, when a nation's soul is in the making, are beyond price.

It is a far cry from her, in Montreal or Quebec, to the Habitant of the backwoods, but he is a living feature of French Canada.

“PIERRE AND HIS PEOPLE”

Men may come and men may go ; the Habitant has a long history and he will endure. He represents the spirit of hand-labour in a country which is impatient with slow-going. He is worthy, frugal, hard-working, a man who digs a none too fat living out of the soil :

“ Bowed by the weight of centuries, he leans
Upon his hoe and gazes on the ground,
The emptiness of ages in his face,
And on his back the burden of the world.”

The Habitant rears a large family and is taught that herein he is doing his chief duty to the French-Canadian people. Away back in the days of New France, when he began to dig the Canadian soil, he was robbed, by the officers of the French King, of all they could lay hands upon. The result, coupled with the eternal struggle for bread and a trifle more, has been that he has developed a carefulness, a craftiness, almost a “ slimness ” such as has been attributed to the Boers, who, if they have the quality, got it from their fight with a new country and savages.

The French-Canadian Habitant is ever on the defensive in making a bargain—a “ canny ” fellow. A Canadian bishop once connected

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

this characteristic with the Norman ancestry of many of the Habitants, and illustrated it with a story. A Norman bridegroom, about to be married, was asked in the usual fashion, would he take the waiting bride as his wife ? “ I am here for that purpose, am I not ? ” he answered—cannily.

A quiet sombreness dwells with the French-Canadian Habitant, partly the result of the long Canadian winter, when the earth and all that therein is are frozen up. But mirth and a good heart also lurk in him, and if you go out to a little farm in the country and get on friendly terms with the farmer, he will call his sons about him and they will sing to you all the afternoon ; sing the old French-Canadian *chansons* like that dainty satire on one of our warriors who went to Quebec to capture fierce Frontenac and then came back again :

“ ‘ Sir Phips ’ ” s’en va-t-en guerre,
Miron-ton, miron-ton, miron-taine,
Sir Phips s’en va-t-en guerre,
Ne sait quand reviendra. . . . ”

Ah ! there are many elements in the French-Canadian character which you would like, and the golden heart of gaiety is one of them.

“PIERRE AND HIS PEOPLE ”

He is a good fellow, Pierre, and he and his people help to enrich the Great Dominion with human colour. If you know his language and can get into his confidence, you will find him as diverting as the Scottish farmer who, coming to London, said to a friend, “I’ve had a vera guid journey, except that I lost my luggage.”

“ Oh, how was that ? ”

“ Weel, the cork cam’ oot ! ”

XVIII. A PRINCE OF DEMOCRATS

WHAT Every Woman Knows still remains the subject of pretty guessing, a perfumed, hidden-away mystery to each woman, because she thinks she knows something the other does not. But there is one thing all women want to know, and that is about kings and queens, princesses and princes. It is the survival, in age, of the young girl's regard for fairy princes who are to come riding in beautiful chariots and bring romance.

Now that takes me to the Duke of Connaught's Governor-Generalship of Canada, for somehow he has been the Prince Charming of two generations of our royal family. He is a soldier, he has travelled far and wide, he looks the part of prince, and he is very natural and modest. No wonder then, as I hear said on every hand, that the Canadians have taken to him as their Prince Charming, as one who has shown how real a part royalty, in a right representative, may play in a plain democracy like Canada.

Happy, they say, is the country which has no history, but surely it cannot be a very interesting country. A history Canada is going

A PRINCE OF DEMOCRATS

to have, and the Duke and Duchess of Connaught and their daughter, Princess Patricia, will, when the bulk of it is written, be seen to have turned noteworthy pages. There is already testimony to that in the winsome stories and anecdotes which are told about them among the Canadians. You might almost measure a reputation by the friendly anecdotage which clusters about it. It means affection, a human touch, and pleased should he be of whom this can be said.

The Canadians, I gather, were a little afraid that great ceremonies might come in the train of a royal Governor-General. "We are a simple folk," they thought to themselves, "and we probably should not get on very well in a world of purple." They have had no purple, no rigid etiquette, no high ceremony, but just frank friendliness, genuine sincerity. We know from Tennyson that "Kind hearts are more than coronets, And simple faith than Norman blood," but in Canada the Duke of Connaught has managed, without any effort, to combine all these. It is assuredly a triumph in personality and, on the larger ground, an imperial achievement.

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

The custom is for a Governor-General of Canada to visit the whole Dominion in his term of office, and that means travelling hard and far. The Duke of Connaught may be tired of a morning, but he retains the soldierly habit of rising early. He had stepped down from his sleeping-car in some corner of the land and was wandering along in the crisp, champagne air, when he met a manly fellow who said, "I'm wondering if I could get a look at the Duke." "Well," was the amused answer, "I'm the Duke," and they chatted.

Somewhere else he was enjoying a like walk before breakfast, and it took him to the garden fence of a settler. He leant over it, looking at the vegetables and the fruit, and presently the farmer came out and recognised his eminent visitor. But this confused him not a bit, because he found a Duke who could discuss potatoes and cabbages with the readiness of a gardener.

When a prince of the blood becomes the Governor-General of a democracy like Canada, it is the natural prince in him that tells most. There the Duke of Connaught succeeds every time, because he remains himself, although

A PRINCE OF DEMOCRATS

framed by his great position. "He has many graces," a well-known Canadian said to me, "but no airs. He is the easiest man I have ever talked to and the best listener."

These are qualities to perfect the hospitality which has made Rideau Hall, the home of the Governor-General, near Ottawa, a palace of delight. But it is no palace in itself; only a straggling sort of country house, which has grown in size and comfort with the years. It is homely to look at, as it sprawls among its trees, grass and flowers. Homeliness is also the note within, for the chairs, the pictures, the pleasant meeting of light and shade, invoke you to sit down awhile and rest. There is no grandeur, no splendour, just a quiet elegance which gives you a sense of pleasure and comfort.

The picture at Rideau Hall is animated when the Duke and Duchess have a dinner party, or, in the Canadian winter, a larger company for skating and tobogganing. "Have we seen everybody?" the Duchess might be heard saying, "for we must do that, even the late-comers." That was a motto to set over the door of a true fort of hospitality such as Rideau Hall. It might be accompanied by another

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

of which the Duke was the author. "Not skating, sir?" said a guest to him when everybody else was on the ice. "No," was the reply, "I should very much like to take a turn, but I must remain here to bid good-bye to our guests."

It is an art to combine the order of a ceremony into a frame of colour, without making that frame heavy, and this secret is known at Rideau Hall. The Duke of Connaught took it with him when he went to New York and Washington on a visit. The American reporters, who are rapid, sure judges of a man, and good fellows themselves, at once called him the "Democratic Duke." There they were instinctively searching for an effective headline, but they also found a happy description of their royal visitor. They got on so well with him that they made up charming anecdotes as to his doings, the highest tribute of American journalism to a popular man.

There was, however, probably truth in a tale about the Duke and an American messenger-boy whom he bumped into while taking an unceremonious walk. "Very sorry," he said, putting a hand on the lad's shoulder to keep

A PRINCE OF DEMOCRATS

him from going over, "but it's the first time I have collided with a free-born American citizen." The boy had probably seen the Duke earlier, for he knew him and ran off smiling at his little experience.

New York went so daft about the Duke that he might almost have been a new "skyscraper," and it included the Duchess and Princess Patricia in its daftness. Our dear cousins of the Republic have a fixed idea that men and women of blood royal must be quite unlike other human beings. Perhaps they have heard a story which runs in my mind as being associated with King Edward. "Yes," he said to a friend, "if you really knew how some of us were brought up, you would wonder that we remain so human."

If King Edward said that, he would have been thinking of his own cast-iron upbringing, but he escaped from it in after life. With as much in memory, Americans need not have been surprised when they found the Duke of Connaught a "democratic duke." Simplicity is usually to be found on the heights, and that is natural, because the head that gets turned cannot remain up aloft.

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

Quiet tact, the right thing done from the heart, not out of any code of ceremony, is what has made the Connaught reign in Canada so popular. This may be illustrated once more by a story of the Duchess who, with the Duke and Princess Patricia, were at the opera in Montreal, a city that knows and loves music.

At the close of one of the acts a bouquet was presented to the second lady of the company. This was a just tribute to good singing but it overlooked the leading lady, as the Duchess of Connaught at once felt. "I'll send her my bouquet," she said, and an equerry hurried with it to the stage. The delicacy of the compliment was instantly understood by the audience, who cheered loudly, while the leading lady bowed and smiled. Out of a mischance for her had come a right royal chance, and in this world that does not often happen even to *prima donnas*.

The Canadians credit Princess Patricia with sparkle and wit, as well as with a dowry of English good looks. A little tale, maybe not a true one, which they probably have never heard, will confirm them in this view. It concerns the musical studies of herself and her

A PRINCE OF DEMOCRATS

sister Princess Margaret, when they were girls.

One day the lesson did not, for some reason, go very well, and Princess Margaret, wishing to lighten the clouded brow of the teacher, said, "I'm afraid we have been tiresome this morning." "Perhaps," chimed in Princess Patricia with a merry gleam of her eye, "but isn't it a headache that you have, dear professor?" If it was, that neat sparklet chased it away; or so goes the harmless story.

A penalty of being royal is that people want to look in at your windows, want to hear what you are saying, and that must be trying at times. Actors will tell you that it is very hard to play royalty on the stage and make the business real. It used to be said that there was only one actor in London who could make the part of a gentleman quite real before the footlights. If there be anything in all this, has it occurred to you how difficult royal ceremonies must be, what particular gifts are needed for them.

A sense of drama must be present to make them go fitly, with time and sentiment matching, everything of a piece. To succeed

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

a royal ceremony has to march as surely as a play, with the addition that, being actuality, not make-believe, it is more difficult to arrange. If there is a "wait" in a play those on the stage can occupy it with asides, but in a royal ceremony this is not possible. It has to go like clockwork, to keep time, and all through to be human, else it loses touch of the on-lookers.

Your prayer, like mine, may well be one of thankfulness that we have been called to spheres from which these tasks are absent. But when they have to be done it is best they should be well done, and in Canada the Duke of Connaught has shown a nice mastery of them. He has also shown how they may be yoked alongside the car of Democracy, to help it forward on useful paths.

Naturally he has been expected to take the initiative in matters which another Governor-General might have left alone. He has done that deftly, wisely, and his labours in the statesmanship side of his office will bear good fruit. The influence and example of a royal Governor-General carry other people in their train, as a river grows on its way to the sea.

A PRINCE OF DEMOCRATS

For instance, the Duke of Connaught has, on more than one occasion, spoken of the right part which money should play in life. He has said, in so many words, that the pursuit of money ought not to be the whole object of a man, lest at this he lose his own soul. Instead, life should be lived on the high ground of endeavour, of doing one's duty to one's fellow men.

Now, there is nothing original in that counsel, which is as old as Christ's teaching. But in any young, eager country it is well that it should be heard, and, coming from the Duke of Connaught, it is heard as if it were a bell.

He has got the ear of Canada, thanks partly to the fact that he says what he has to say shortly, crisply, directly, with dispatch, whether it be grave or gay. He knows when to stop and the Canadians appreciate this all the more because, as orators, they don't always know when to stop. With them parting from a speech is such sweet sorrow that they would go on parting until to-morrow !

Once the Duke casually dropped in upon four thousand of Canada's soldiers who were in camp and a trifle surprised at what followed.

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

His visit, if he had been of another pattern, might have brought pipe-clay ceremonial, a review, a march-past with bayonets shining bare and glorious in the sun.

A picture of that ancient military sort used to bring me to a stand every day before the window of a second-hand shop in London. It showed a very wooden war-horse, on which rode a fat officer whose name and distinctions were set out below in large type. He brandished a short sword in each hand and, apparently, cried a challenge to all other men of war. He was a puffy little fellow, the most absurd god of strife you ever saw, and if that hobby-horse had moved a foot he would ingloriously have fallen out of the saddle.

This picture came back to my mind when I was told how far removed from such sword-exercise was the Duke of Connaught's ordering among the Canadian soldiers. No blare of trumpeters, no captaining and shouting asked or got he. He simply set to master the camp, talking with the commanding officers, examining the equipment, looking in at the hospital. He made an arduous day altogether, and at the end of it led an infantry attack and marched

A PRINCE OF DEMOCRATS

over miles of rough ground at the head of the Governor-General's Foot-Guards.

“Connaught style!” cheered the Canadians, and Connaught style let it be in the Great Dominion, where he gives a notable lesson on Royalty and Democracy as comrades in arms and hearts.

XIX. THE EMIGRANT'S FAREWELL

YOUR favourite songs, like mine, are the old Scottish ballads, and so well is Canada peopled by folk of Scottish blood that you hear them everywhere. This has seemed very homely to me, because in every chorus there has been the music of your voice, sweet as it always is, low, as it has come so far.

When I hear a Scottish song in Canada, or listen to a Scottish air played on the fiddle, I have two feelings. One is of pride, that my native country should have done all it has, by head and hand, to build up the Great Dominion. The other is sad, for it brings me a picture of Scotland losing her people in undue numbers, to Canada and other new lands. Sing me "Auld Lang Syne" in Canada, which sings it from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and I think of the Scottish emigrant's farewell, as you and I saw it on the spot only a brief summer ago.

We were seated on a hillside of the Grampians, which spread away before our eyes to the four quarters of the world. The sun just blazed at us and turned the sea of mountains into a sea of glory. Near Morven was

THE EMIGRANT'S FAREWELL

turquoise, and far Lochnagar was a cornflower-blue. We had a feast of space shot into by the heights of Mother Earth, and a riot of colour. It was vastly good to feel, to see, to breathe, this big, long, slow thing of Nature in the Scottish Highlands.

“Pavilioned in splendour!” That had been in a hymn of our public worship the Sunday before. The phrase came into the mind with the completing part of the line—“and girded with praise.” There were the pavilions of splendour, heather hills to which each passing cloud gave a different tint from the high, gleaming sun. We were unequal to gird them with praise, and, indeed, the silence, something you could almost hear, took us into its keeping.

“Aren’t those patches of vivid red very fine,” you said quietly, after a while, pointing to a low hill fronting us.

“Yes,” I answered, “they flash their message in blood red, but it’s strange that you should have noticed it. Those are patches of new heather, first-year’s heather, heather for which there were burnings, so that the grouse might have it sweet to feed on.”

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

“The heather on fire!” you put the slogan-like thought into words, more to yourself than to me.

“Exactly,” was my remark; “the heather on fire, not in the old traditional Scottish sense but as it has been on fire in Scotland during recent years. It still burns, this new flame, but if it goes on much longer, we may have the ancient, bitter blaze back, with a modern heat.”

You half lifted yourself from your couch of heather and looked at me and then at the flaming red spots set in the darker space of old heather.

“Well,” said I, “those signs of the cross, branded as if they were letters of blood, on the breast of the Scottish Highlands, mean that in many regions grouse are more valued than men. It is place for the deer, heather for the grouse, and let the men—‘whistle o’er the lave o’t!’”

No men and no women are more attached to their own land than Scottish men and women. Its embrace is as tender to them as a sweetheart’s, its passion of romance, runs in their blood. A deserted countryside! It

THE EMIGRANT'S FAREWELL

hurts them to return and see it, and if they have burst the bonds of their old theology, if their praying has a wider demand than merely "Give us this day our daily bread," they inwardly rebel with Providence for permitting these things.

Present are the far, solemn distances of light and shadow, which make the dreamy Highland temperament and blend it and the Saxon nature of the Scottish Lowlands in the most notable men that Scotland, ancient or modern, has produced. They have little to do in some parts nowadays, those Nature-moulders, because the people are not there.

That is a loss to the world of large, practical forces, of still larger spiritual forces ; a loss of high, resolute purpose, which it can ill spare, of soul which it cannot spare at all. It is a loss of action, and of poetry, for poetry lives in the eternal love of maid and man, and if a countryside is unpeopled there is nobody to come a-courtin'. "Whistle an' I'll come tae ye, my lad," goes the song, but often there's nobody to whistle, unless it be the dogs after the deer and the grouse, or maybe the sheep !

A Scotsman loves a bit of Scottish soil,

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

though generally he gets but the six feet of which he cannot be deprived. Perhaps this love of the soil is at once an expression of his love of country, and an inheritance, so far anyhow as the Highlands are concerned, of the old clan system. Under it ownership was really communal, the chieftain being the holder and governor in the name of his people.

When the clan system broke down a beginning was made, in a very haphazard fashion at first, with the building up of big private estates. This went on with the years, until gradually the descendants of a clan, if the Highland clearances let them survive at all, were merely "tenants at will." That term still describes the conditions on which houses are built and held in some parts of the Highlands. A cheerful plan for getting Scottish people to abide on their native heath !

When the Highland glens were full of crofters and cotters, deer and grouse and salmon counted for little. The smoke which uprose from chimneys, scattered around the countryside, could tell of venison or salmon a-cooking within. Time was when Scottish farm-servants made it a condition of service that they must

THE EMIGRANT'S FAREWELL

not be given salmon—a rich, satisfying dish, when all is said and done—more than twice a week. They do not need to make such a demand to-day, for salmon is hardly seen in the ordinary rural household of Scotland, unless, perhaps, in the late autumn, when there has been an improper “black-fishing” expedition on the river.

The wealth which discovered itself in Scottish deer forests and grouse moors, changed all the old conditions. Landlords or their sporting tenants built ring fences to keep their domains free of human feet. “Private Road” was a sign stuck up on many a right-of-way which the years had consecrated to the community. Often the notice took the active form, “Trespassers will be prosecuted,” or the menacing form, “Beware! You may be shot in the forest!” Think what the gradual result of this blockhouse system, applied to hill and dale in the Highlands, has been. The garrison that possessed them under the Duke of Cumberland was mild and harmless in comparison with the modern garrison flying the red flag of sport.

New men and old acres, and if possible they

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

have served the permanent interests of the Scottish Highlands worse than did the old men and the old acres. There is a thread of tragedy which appeals to one, in the breaking up of Scottish estates. A family will have owned a whole stretch of country for years, and got along very amiably with the dwellers on it. Generation of that family will have succeeded generation, and far too often its members have done nothing for themselves, but just lived out of the estate.

This was bound, some day, to end disastrously, for no estate, even in prosperous landed times, could bear such a drain indefinitely ; so parts would be sold, then other parts, usually to rich sporting tenants. A tragedy of unwisdom, but the hardest burden really fell upon the tenants, because a harassed landlord naturally got as much as he could out of them. That also could not last, and the tenant sang, " To the West, to the West, to the land of the free ! " especially if he had in him a touch of the Dugald Dalgetty spirit.

The desire for adventure, the pitting of himself against the world, is strong in the Scottish man. The Dugald Dalgettys, who

THE EMIGRANT'S FAREWELL

went forth sword in hand, were examples of this adventurous spirit in the olden age. The sword is not, in our piping times of peace, the weapon with which to carve out a personal fortune and career. That has to be done by other means, and in these the Dugald Dalgettys are accomplished. Scotland is a small country, a poor country, and the big field is elsewhere.

Here, to Canada, comes the strenuous, conquering Scot, who would adventure anyhow, but there is the other Scot, who would stay at home if he could make it a full home. The grand mistake in the Scottish Highlands for a century back, however the manner of its bearing may have varied, is that hard money has been put before God's men and women.

By contrast, somebody arrives back in a Scottish district, after an absence of a few years in Canada. He brings with him tales of prosperity, and at the next Whitsun term half a dozen farm-servants emigrate in quest of a like luck. He sets the feet of lusty youth dancing for over-the-sea, in search of wonderland.

Somehow the Scottish farm-servant remains

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

very much a creature by himself, a human being who belongs to the community, but hardly has a place in it. What is expected of him apart from his struggle with the face of the earth? Little, indeed: that he shall gather with his brethren in the nearest village of a Saturday night, stand vacantly about, and later on, after a few "drams," spar mildly with a friend, each trying to knock off the other's bonnet—all quite good-humoured and foolish.

The use of the bicycle, however, has given the Scottish farm-servant a larger view of the world, when he has any at all. It affords him easy communication with towns, where there is the bustle of life to attract. Some day he says to himself, "I'll be farm-servant no more, but go to the town and work." He becomes a recruit in the army of unskilled labour which menaces city life, and his second state is worse than his first. But the dull hard days and lonely nights of farm service? No; he will not return to these.

Well, in a re-ordered Scotland something should be done for the farm-servant. He must be made to feel that he is like other people,

THE EMIGRANT'S FAREWELL

not a class by himself, almost an outcast. He must be taught the dignity of his calling and given an easy natural road towards becoming a farmer, for he cannot always marry his master's daughter. That is the shining glory, the hall-mark of emancipation, though, indeed, Robert Burns, being a humble ploughman, could not aspire to the hand of Anna Ronald of the Bennals. You know the poem and the lines :

“ I lo'e her mysel', but daurna weel tell,
My poverty keeps me in awe, man. . . .”

Scotland has done a giant's work as chief coloniser for the British Empire, and it might be said, sometimes fairly, sometimes not fairly, that, in doing it, her sons have done well for themselves. Yes ; many have honourably prospered, but there has been the lost legion of the heart-broken, those who have never returned. You hardly ever hear of a full family gathering in Scotland, as you do in England at Christmas or the New Year, because the dirge which sobs through the “ Canadian Boat Song ” is still to-day in the figures of Scottish emigration :

JOHN JONATHAN AND COMPANY

“ ‘ Listen to me as when ye heard our fathers
Sing long ago the songs of other shores,
Listen to me and then in chorus gather
All your deep voices as ye pull your oars : ’
Fair these broad meads, these hoary woods are grand,
But we are exiles from our father’s land.

“ From the lone shieling on the misty island
Mountains divide us and a waste of seas,
Yet the blood is strong, and the heart is Highland,
And we in dreams behold the Hebrides.

“ We ne’er shall tread the fancy-haunted valley
Where ’twixt dark hills creeps out the small, clear stream,
In arms around the patriarch banner rally,
Nor see the moon on Royal tombstones gleam.

“ Where the bold kindred in the times long vanished
Conquered the soil and fortified the keep,
No seer foretold their children would be banished,
That some degenerate lord might boast his sheep.

“ Come foreign raid, let discord burst in slaughter,
Oh then for clansmen true and stern claymore,
The hearts that would have shed their blood like water,
Beat heavily beyond the Atlantic roar.”

It is told of King George, who is attached to Scotland, that he said to one of the plain men who are his friends as well as his servants on the hills of Balmoral: “ If they would only let me live six months here every year, they might do what they like with me for the other six.” May we, in the goodness of a little time, have another King’s Speech, publicly read to

THE EMIGRANT'S FAREWELL

Parliament, making it possible for Scotsmen to be home-dwelling instead of over-sea bent, though Scotland's loss is Canada's gain. "Siller an' lan' " and the gamble of a strenuous life they sail for, but they would rather stay if they could only—

" . . . make a happy fireside clime
To weans and wife."

XX. "HOME IS THE SAILOR!"

IT was good to set out, because in that lay the pleasures of expectation, which make life hopeful. It has been good to journey, for I have lighted upon many experiences and some new lamps. But it is best of all to turn homeward where the joys of certainty are.

Yes, the anchor's weighed by the St. Lawrence, the Straits of Belle Isle, and the far north road of traffic across the Atlantic. It will be my own knock, not the postman's, that will render this last account of my doings to you. But the parcel is "Carriage Forward," which is the business way of saying "Pay on Delivery," without occasion being given for an examination of the goods. That is another pretty game of life, always diverting because the stakes are high.

You will willingly "pay on delivery," and you will be taking no risk, because the New World is keeping none of me except my regard and a real interest in its affairs. Possibly I have launched them at you too much, instead of holding to the personal note of my sailing away. But it is natural for a man to take an

“HOME IS THE SAILOR!”

interest in the public life and in the peoples of fresh countries and, at least, it keeps him out of other interests. His work, after all, is to be up and doing, while the woman waits, to be glad with him in success and a comforter in failure.

Hers is clearly the finer mission of the two, for in action, movement, the continual effort, man forgets anxiety and only thinks of the hill-top when he reaches it, and of the valley when he discovers himself there. But the woman watches the drama, without being red-handed in it, and that is an anxiety which may bring the grey into her hair. Not that she need mind, though invariably she does, because a woman's grey hairs are the honourable scars of battle. They are, in their whiteness, an outward pledge of trials surmounted, of conquering by purity in thought, word and deed.

St. Paul wrote that the glory of a woman is her hair, and it is a special glory when it is grey or white. Only the other evening I stood beside the noble Falls of Montmorency, watching them leap in the moonlight, and I fancied them alive with the faces of beautiful, white-haired women. These faces were smiling, and the music of the falling waters might

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have been their voices calling to each other. Perhaps they were the faces of women who had lived long ago, revisiting the glimpses of the moon. Perhaps; because they would be sure to gather at a mirror like the Falls of Montmorency, wishing to see themselves in it.

Stranger things than we even imagine do happen, and they are unfailingly beautiful if women and children come into them, uncannier if men be concerned. Maybe it is that women and children leave this world more beautifully, more becomingly than men, and so, when they return, have that beauty, that becomingness. Women often die gladly, being wearied and sure in their hearts of the world "over the hills and far away." Men die less gladly, having in them more of the physical animal which struggles to live here and now, and less of the holiness of faith. More men, too, die by violence, and there was many a case of that when the English and the French faced each other across the Falls of Montmorency.

Was it out of the dying then that a friend of mine, who dwells by these famous fresh waters, had a visitation which he never doubts and can never explain. He was in his garden

“HOME IS THE SAILOR!”

when he saw three men walk by him arm in arm, for that was the certain picture to his eyes. They were on a private path which skirted the garden, and their air of possession made him say to himself, “Well, here are very unconcerned invaders; let’s see who they are!” He walked out beside them to ascertain, and raised a hand for the nearest man’s shoulder. That hand fell through space and at the same moment the whole apparition vanished.

What do you make of that? Nothing, and you are wise not to try unduly. The back of beyond is best left alone even when it comes to us, or, what is the same, we believe it has come. So, to chase it away, allow me to tell you a merrier tale also heard above the roar of the Montmorency Falls.

When the Duke of Kent, the father of Queen Victoria, was a young man he lived for a time in Quebec, on military service. He there formed a happy alliance—an early *Entente Cordiale*—with a French-Canadian lady of beauty and gifts, and it lasted until he married for reasons of State. Kent House, in Quebec, still remains a testimony to the romance, if you want such evidence.

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My esteemed Canadian of Montmorency has a little camp bedstead which belonged to the Duke, an unluxurious article made of wood. He was showing it, with other relics of French-Canada, to a French lady, who said, "Yes, very interesting, but so very narrow; only for one—where, where, did Madame sleep?"

"Oh," quoth our Canadian, flying to a commonplace, as we often do when we have to round an awkward angle; "oh, she slept in the arms of Morpheus."

"Morpheus! Morpheus! Monsieur Morpheus!" exclaimed his visitor, with awaiting curiosity in her eyes. "But who was he? Ah!" she added swiftly, a smile in each eye—"I know; you mean the Duke's *aide-de-camp*!"

Did the Duke, among his other adventures, ever sail down the St. Lawrence from Quebec to the Atlantic? If he had any eye for the picturesque in a river-way, he would have liked the experience. It is a panorama of living water, rich in moods and colour, of virgin green country stretching away on either side, in wood and hill. Bays run into the land here and there further than the eye

“HOME IS THE SAILOR!”

can follow them, and village spires lift towards the sky. The shores are often fringed with the homes of French-Canadian fishermen and farmers, and somebody tells me of a settlement descended from soldiers of the Frazer Highlanders who stormed Quebec.

When the war was over those Highlanders settled in Canada, married French-Canadian wives and became, in effect, Habitants. Their children grew up in the atmosphere of the French language and the Roman Catholic Church, for the mothers secured that. Thus in these Frazers to-day all traces of the “dim shieling and the misty mountain” are lost, except, indeed, the name, and they are as keen, narrow French-Canadians as their half-brethren among whom they dwell. You might see a bit of the Highlander in their short, light moving legs, a physical characteristic of lands where there are many hills, or in their high cheekbones. But the average type now is that begotten by the French-Canadian woman, and the language is the old French of Louis XIV, spoken with the crack of a whip.

You sail onward to the corner of Labrador, whose bleak, gaunt shores lie out against the

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Arctic seas like skeletons. They seem to have been scoured by the ice and the waves until there is nothing left on them, and yet Labrador has much mineral wealth. Here, where there are always groaning icebergs, and often clammy fogs, you take leave of the New World and steer eastward for the Old World.

Each, you may reflect, at this parting, has its mission in the providence of affairs. The New World is to supply fresh fuel, fresh driving forces, fresh homes for the Old World. It, in turn, has to see that time is made in life for the exercise of our souls, for the spiritual pilgrim in us. These are two tasks natural to youth and age, because they are the complement of each other, and "those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder."

It is a cold, icy voyage over the Atlantic almost by the very edge of the Arctic Circle, but you find a very wonderful vigour in it. The air, blown straight from the Pole, feels as if it were ozone on which you could float up to the skies. But you do not want to become an angel unawares, and therefore you hold hard to the railing of the ship and let the wind whistle by. Its influence on you is strangely

“HOME IS THE SAILOR!”

pacifying and you snuggle contentedly into a rug and a deck-chair and watch the constant struggle between sun and cloud which goes on in those high latitudes.

Now the sun has forced a passage through its enemy and is making the face of the sea a shimmer of dancing light. Next moment the clouds have closed up and that shaft of light is gone, being replaced by shadows and threats. Once more the sun triumphs, and so the fight goes on with all the surprises of Atlantic weather, until you arrive within the softening influences of the Old World. Then birds which do not live by the sea alone, but know the land also, begin to meet you, and the end of the homeward voyage is near.

You have a mixture of sorrow at saying good-bye to Mother Ocean and of gladness at being within beat of the haven of your heart. The two feelings in you play a last tattoo with each other, and you let them fight it out, victor and vanquished. Would it not have been fine, your spirit of adventure whispers, for it is never satisfied, if the big ship had turned due north into the Arctic. But the unknown is ever perilous, and she has kept her

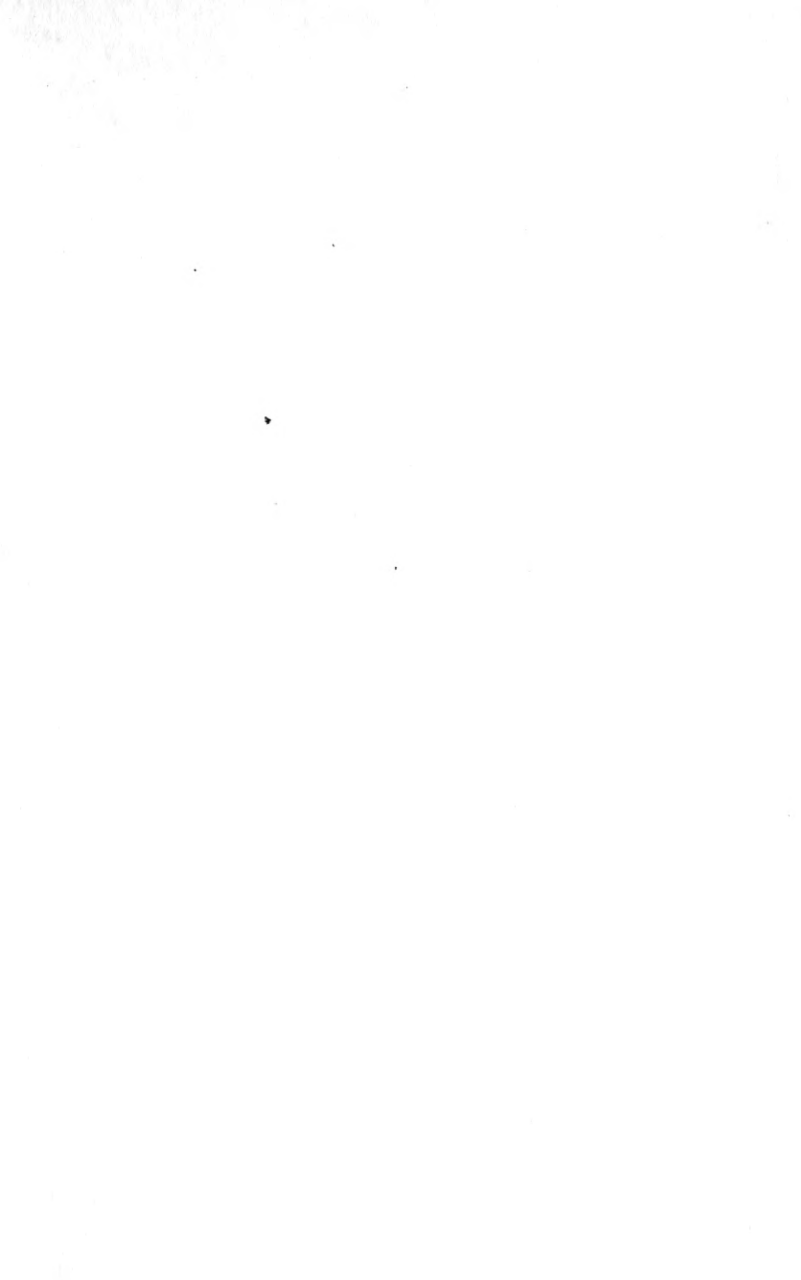
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course faithfully and made a prosperous voyage. That best contents us, and now we can sit down together abidingly, and read our favourite "R.L.S.," beginning with the sweet, familiar lines, which will take a new, particular meaning for us :

" Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
And the hunter home from the hill ! "

And, as the years go by, you shall sing oftenest of your ballads that one, which Stevenson himself must have liked, with the trumpet-call to life as we should all love and live it :

" ' Fight on my men ! ' Sir Andrew saith,
' I am hurt a little, yet not slain :
I'll but lie down and bleed a while,
And then I'll up and fight again.' "





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